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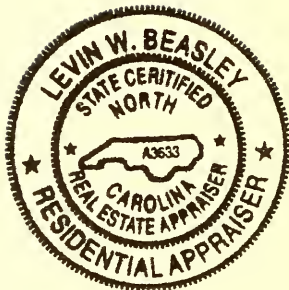
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“In The Beginning---
BAPTISTS”!

* * *

History
Of
The
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
New Bern
North Carolina
1809-1984

Edna Avery Cook

* * * * *

Dedicated
To
The
Memory Of
The Founders

* * *

ELIJAH CLARK
JOHN BRINSON
MARY WILLIS MITCHEL

* * * * *

C286
N53

The ELIJAH CLARK HOUSE
Where The Church Was Founded
May 11, 1809



Restored And Used For A Private
Residence

The First Building



Erected 1809-1811

The Church As It Looks Today



Erected in 1848

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Mrs. Cook, a Senior member of the church, is married to Samuel T. Cook, a retiree of the U. S. Postal Service. Their only child, Grace Sheldon, who is married to Robert A. Ipock, Vice-President and City Executive of North Carolina National Bank, is the Registrar of Tryon Palace.

Robert A. Ipock Jr., the only grandchild, is a recent graduate of the School of Agriculture of North Carolina State University.

For more than half a century Mrs. Cook has had a vital interest in the history of the church.

She has no journalistic background, but from very early school days she has loved "speaking" and "writing", and is an avid reader, particularly in the field of history and biography. She has a keen memory for facts and dates concerning subjects which interest her.

Her thirty seven working years were spent with Caplon Smith Co., a highly regarded family Department Store which was destroyed by a disastrous fire in September 1974. She was a buyer, a decorator, and advertising person and a salesperson.

She is a long time active member of the Woman's Club, the New Bern Garden Club, a Red Cross Volunteer and a member of the New Bern Historical Society.

Mrs. Cook was a charter member and Vice-President of the Business and Professional Woman's Club when it was organized in New Bern thirty years ago.

FOREWORD

The recording of the following pages of history has been a rewarding and a pleasurable experience.

Hundreds of hours of thought and research have gone into the effort. We have delved first into our minds, then into corners, crevices, desk drawers, old minutes, church rolls, programs of special events, news clippings, old trunks, and the Register of Deeds Office of the Craven County Courthouse.

We spent time in the Public Library, and countless hours searching in Col. John Whitford's Walking Stick Papers, as we have attempted to put the information gleaned, into some semblance of order.

Our purpose has been to bring alive for you, something of our early years, and to preserve for posterity, the times in which we now live, that those souls who come after us, may have a keen appreciation of our heritage as they continue their mission in the First Baptist Church of New Bern, North Carolina, and to the ends of the earth.

ABOUT THE BOOK

These recorded pages are a narrative type story of long years of rich history of The First Baptist Church of New Bern, North Carolina.

It is simply written in the vernacular of the times in which it happened, in order that it be more interesting and easier to read.

Had we wished, it could not have been a documented history because the sources for documentation, unfortunately were just not available.

All through the book, the writer attempts to bring to life to the reader the fact that throughout the one hundred and seventy five years of history the church and its ministry has held a place of importance in the denomination from the local to the national level.

The purpose of the church then and now is to carry out the Great Commission as recorded in the New Testament writings in the book of Matthew.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| Rev. Joseph S. Larrimore..... | Pastor |
| Rev. James F. Norris, III,..... | Associate Pastor |
| William K. Russel, Jr..... | Chairman of Deacons |
| Arnold Harrell..... | Finance Chairman |
| Mrs. John S. Hudson..... | Chairman Archives |

Recognition is given Julia Ann Hudson, Chairperson of the Archives Committee who's inspiration it was to research, record, and publish these pages of history on the occasion of the 175th Anniversary of the First Baptist Church of New Bern, North Carolina.

The Author expresses appreciation for her support.

“The Ole Church”

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH HISTORY

“IN THE BEGINNING---BAPTISTS”

It is reliably reported that Baptists were in this section even before New Bern was settled in 1710. Historical writings attest to the fact that an eminent Baptist minister, one Rev. Paul Palmer, came to this city in the early 1730's, found some people of the Baptist faith and urged that they organize a church.

In 1739, on Christmas day, in the county courthouse, a famous evangelist by the name of George Whitefield preached to a large congregation. Although the cause of religion probably received inspiration from his visit and powerful preaching, nothing more came of it at the time.

Col. John Whitford records in his Historical Papers concerning “Newbern's Ole Baptist Church” the following account of attempts made by several persons to organize a Baptist Church. He relates that in 1740, the following persons were arrested for dissenting from the King's religion: John James, William Fulsher (Fulcher), Frances Ayres (female), Samuel Harvey, Nicholas Purifoy and John Brooks. Their bail was set at 40 pounds sterling.

On September 22, 1740, with six Justices sitting on the bench, the following persons appeared before the court and took oaths of allegiance and supremacy, but dissented from several articles. These persons were John Brooks, John James, Robert Spring, Nicholas Purifoy, and Thomas Fulcher. They were labeled “Dissenting Protestants”. Nothing more is heard of them at this time. We have to wonder what happened to the female of the group. Perhaps the spelling of the name was incorrect; it could have been “Francis”, and not “Frances”.

Again, from our own old records, we find that attempts were made to organize a Baptist Church. In 1741, three courageous Baptists, James Brinson, William Fulcher and Nicholas Purifoy, requested permission to build a church in New Bern. Records show that their request was denied. They were charged with a misdemeanor, were probably whipped, bound over to keep the peace and slapped into jail for three months. For the remainder of the 18th Century, it is as though a curtain were tightly drawn. We know nothing more of Baptists in New Bern for a period of sixty-eight years.

In 1983 it is interesting to note that we have in our own church family an elderly woman, Mrs. Annie Mae Fulcher Gilikin, who is a descendant of Thomas Fulcher.

Again, in the beginning of the 19th century, Baptists in New Bern come to life, having continued, we believe, to promote their cause through the dark years of which we have no record.

It was on, May 11, 1809, that the efforts of Baptists in New Bern were crowned with success. In the front room of the Elijah Clark House at the intersection of Craven and Middle Streets, Mr. Clark, Mr. John Brinson and Mrs. Joshua (Mary Willis) Mitchell met and organized the "Baptist Church of New Bern." It was years later before it was called "The First Baptist Church."

Let it be said and understood early on, that from the very beginning women have played a most important role in the life of the church.

We have to believe that the instituting of this particular church was a part of God's Master Plan to promote the program of missions to the ends of the earth.

From its humble beginning to this day the church continues to have a place of prominence in the denomination as it seeks to fulfill the great commission as given in the 28th chapter of Matthew's gospel.

It was not until 1911 that a "Meeting House" was completed. During this period, all services of the church were held in the homes of members. It is interesting to note that services were not held as we hold them today. The main worship hour was most likely observed in the afternoon. There were few evening services probably because the main mode of local travel was walking.

The Clark House, which has been in constant use as a residence through the years, has been restored and is a most attractive home.

We learned from old records that in the beginning it set further back in the triangle on which it was built. At some time it was moved closer to the point of the lot to make room for another house.

We wish today that Baptists had secured the title to the property and made it into a museum to house our memorabilia.

The first minister who preached for the church was an itinerant named John (Daddy) McCabe. He preached off and on for the two years while the church was being constructed

and almost a year afterwards. "Daddy McCabe" was an eccentric Baptist preacher of the Elias Dodson type. Even though he never belonged to the church nor was he the pastor, the church had great love and respect for him and always considered him a faithful friend. Some years later, one Rachell McCabe is listed on the church roll. One has to wonder if she was Rev. McCabes' widow. It is said that he died here and was buried under the pulpit. Available records do not confirm that fact, but records do mention that the Baptists' should have kept their "Ole Church and Graveyard."

Now to the building!

Mr. John Brinson agreed to furnish logs for a meeting house. We have no record of how the church building lot was acquired, nor from whom, nor the cost of it. It was situated in a triangle at the intersection of Queen, Metcalf, and Johnson streets. The church was erected on the highest point in the city--20 feet above tide water. It is an interesting side glance that the church building and Mr. Elijah Clarks' house were both erected on triangle lots. The lot was #416 on the city map.

The logs from which the timbers were cut were floated ten miles up the river from Mr. Brinsons plantation. Mr. Elijah Clark promised to "see to" the cutting of the timber, and to try to procure the necessary funds for the construction.

Young Zacchaeus Slade, Mr. Brinsons nephew who was only twenty at the time, drove the team which pulled the logs to the river. Near the river in the city an enormous pit was dug for the sawing and planning of the rough logs.

Young Mr. Slade was to become a dynamic force in the church and was an honored deacon for forty years.

The following is a description of the "Old" Baptist Church Meeting House which the records show was constructed almost entirely with volunteer labor of the church members.

The building, a simple, boxy looking frame structure without a steeple, faced on Johnson Street with front footage of 36', and extended back 40' on Metcalf Street. From floor to ceiling it was 22'. In the summer of 1811 it was ready to be used to the glory of God.

Improvements were made from time to time. The steeple was added, we believe, some years later because of information which has recently come to light. One large yellowish sheet of paper was discovered last December by Mrs. Tull Richardson, whose husband several years ago inherited the pro-

perties of his Aunt, Mrs. Tillie Lewis, who was a devout member of the church until her death around 1935.

The first line of the page reads, "Lane built the steeple of the Old Baptist Church, and had all the carpenters, with no exception, on the new brick church."

In the beginning pews were rented.

The salary of the early pastors amounted to about \$400.00 annually.

Prayer services continued to be held frequently in private residences. In between pastorates, a sermon was read on Sunday morning. They knew nothing of interim pastors as we have today.

The first regular pastor of the church was probably Rev. Wm. T. Biddle according to the earliest records. Mr. Biddle was born in 1787 in Princess Ann County, Virginia, and came to North Carolina as an itinerant preacher. The record shows that he preached at the Baptist Church from 1814 to 1818. He had married in 1810 Miss Mary Nixon Simpson, the only surviving child of general Samuel Simpson, a wealthy Baptist layman who resided at Ft. Barnwell. Of Rev. Biddle it has been said, "Being of large wealth, he preached gratuitously. He was eminent for a devout spirit, a Godly walk, and a large measure of influence."

Unfortunately, we have no record of his ministry. Again, it is as if a curtain were drawn during that period. Col. John D. Whitford, in his "Walking Stick Papers", makes no mention of Mr. Biddle.

Anne Skinner Wade, a member of our church, is a descendant. She and her family are active in all phases of the ministry of the church.

Catherine Waters Crowe, a member of First Baptist Church, is a descendant of Elijah Clark, one of the three founders.

As we have attempted to collect and put together these items of historical interest and importance, we see the need for recording and preserving church records more completely and accurately. What we have available from the early years are incomplete, often times not bearing a date. Some of the recordings of minutes are actually only one statement of one or two lines.

This we have learned: all meetings were opened with prayer and praise.

The church covenant was read or recited frequently. The

church roll was called at each "session". (Meaning church conference, we think).

On the church roll, male members were listed first. Then separately, females were listed. Then the negro members were listed, sometimes only the first name being given.

Frequently, names were continued on the church roll after members were deceased, excluded or for any reason no longer among the flock of worshippers. Names were marked as in the church roll listed below. It is dated, 1811. It reads;

"List of Members-White"

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Elijah Clark | 8. William Sanders |
| 2. James Riggs | 9. Benjamin Churchill (excluded) |
| 3. William Hancock | 10. John Willson (ded) |
| 4. James C. Stevenson | 11. Hardy Whitford |
| 5. John Russell | 12. Zacchaeus Slade |
| 6. Matthew A. Outlaw | 13. Charles Kelly |
| 7. Spencer C. Willis | |

Below is list of females, not numbered. It is interesting that there were always more females than males. So it is today.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Sally Kelly | Elizabeth Bishop |
| Nancy Sandford | Martha Stevenson |
| Sally Slade | Alice Dunham |
| Clary Tilman | Jane Turner |
| Mary Mitchel | Marreford Willson (d) |
| Mary Hancock | Betsy Russell |
| Alib Riggs | Susan Masters |
| Mary Brown (ded) | Nancy Carron |
| Harriet Singleton | Elizabeth Clark |
| Winifred Blackledge | Mary Whitford |
| Elizabeth Worrell | Elizabeth Mitchell (d) |
| Unice Mitchell | Frances Wicker (d) |
| Elizabeth Stevenson | Margaret Willson (d) |

The items such as the one listed, copied from old minutes, are just as they were recorded. For instance, "Ded" we assume meant deceased.

On some of the church rolls in the old recordings we notice that beside the member's name is a designation as to how the member was admitted--by baptism, letter, etc.

In the years of the early church, baptisms were celebrated in the Neuse River since the church had no baptistry.

The earliest church covenant we have been able to find was adopted and signed January 1, 1820. A copy is herewith recorded, leaving a few blank spaces where we were unable to read aged pages. 51 members signed it, and their names are listed on page 4 of the book of minutes dated 1819 to January

1, 1824.

Here is the document:

THE COVENANT OF THE NEW BERN BAPTIST CHURCH

ADOPTED 1st JANUARY 1820

We whos names are subscribed, trusting that we have delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the Kingdom of Gods dear Son by the Sovereign power of the Holy Spirit - do voluntarily separate ourselves from the world and solemnly dedicate ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior, to love Him, to honor Him, and to obey Him - esteeming ourselves no longer our own but inclusively His, who hath died for us and purchased us with His blood.

We do also, as members of Christ, voluntarily and materialy give ourselves to one another, to love, forgive, teach, and exhort each other, and to assist and pray for each other. In this manner constituting our spiritual body in Christ Jesus to be animated, guided and by the grace of God the precepts of the Gospel and the example of our blessed Savior. To be subject to all the rules we may impose upon ourselves, to withdraw ourselves only with the approbation of the body unless unreasonably withheld and always to endeavor to promote the good of the whole. We also voluntarily--in the strength of the Lord to keep in our hearts and earnestly contend for the faith and delivered to the Saints which we believe embraces the following truths and important sacred doctrines. The Love of our God - The Trinity of persons in the GOD HEAD. The fall of man. The total deparvity of human nature. The doctrine of particular election. The Eternal covenant of Grace and particular Redemption, rejuvenation and santification by the Holy Spirit. Justification by the imparted Righteousness of Christ and pardon and reconciliation through his precious blood. The final presence of the Saints in Grace. The resurrection of the dead and the last judgement. The eternal happiness of the Rightous and the eternal torments of the wicked. Finally we do voluntarily and jointly determine in the strength of the Lord to honor his ordinances and obey all his commandments particularly to take up our crosses daily, please ourselves and follow him through evil and good report. To attend strictly to all the duties of the sanctuary to let all our walk and conversation be as Holy to the Gospel. To preserve our garments unspotted from the world. To abstain from all

frivolous and foolish pursuits and carefully to exercise a gospel discipline among ourselves, in our families and our own hearts. To walk in the footsteps of our blessed Master, to do good and love mercy, to keep the fear of the Lord constantly before our eyes, to deny ourselves ungodliness and wordly lusts, to live soberly, rightously and Godly in this present world looking for that blessed hope the glorious appearing of the great God and our Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people jealous of good works.

This is the covenant unto which we now enter before the Lord and we solumely call upon Almighty God to witness the purity of our intentions and the sincerity of our souls in this mighty and sacred engagement and to ratify the above covenant in testimony of which we have individually and cheerfully ordered our names to be subjoined.

Signed by 51 members.

Before we begin with the ministry of Thomas Meredith perhaps we should say that since the foundation of the "Old Baptist Church" in 1809, members adhered strictly to the religious principles as related to their faith. From the day they dissented from the King's Crown Religion, (Church of England), their allegiance was to the Almighty God and the efforts to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The second interest was that of education. You will read, woven all through these pages, the interest in higher education, and their involvement in beginning institutions of learning, as well as their support of them. You will hear more of individual members who became giants in the field of education on every level.

An austere man, though naturally dignified was Rev. Thomas Meredith, who served two pastorates at the New Bern Baptist Church. For the first, which, according to available records was part-time, began when he was called by the church in conference, August 7, 1819. We do not know from whence he came, but we know that he was the first minister of whom their is an authenic record. Col. John D. Whitford in his "Walking Stick Papers" has more to say about him than any other pastor.

First of all, let us say that we have unearthed many inaccuracies such as times and events, as portions of our history have been written and used for special events even during recent years. One instance on May 6, 1979, reveals that Thomas

Meredith was the pastor of New Bern first in 1834. That, of course, was the beginning of his second pastorate.

After being invited to accept the pastorate, August 7, 1819, Rev. Meredith was formally called January 1, 1820. The call was unanimous.

The "Rules of Decorum", which were in effect upon Rev. Merediths' arrival, contain some very interesting articles, a few of which are:

"Art. 4 - The names of all the members having been regularly enrolled shall be called at every meeting, and a significant mark shall be placed beside the name of such as may be found absent."

"Art. 1 - (in part) Every member who signed the church covenant, shall be governed by the Rules of Decorum."

"Art. 8 - No member may speak at a meeting without first rising from his seat, and advising the moderator."

"Art. 9 - Only one person may speak at a time."

"Art. 10 - No church member may absent himself from a church conference without permission from the moderator."

"Art. 11 - Any member not attending a church meeting without a reasonable excuse shall be considered disorderly and dealt with accordingly."

"Art. 18 - No person who is not a member of some Baptist Church of the same faith and order shall be admitted to the church meeting."

Since we know little of Rev. Merediths' first pastorate, perhaps we should simply pick up from the minutes available anything concerning him.

Upon his arrival, he was immediately chosen to be the moderator.

After Brother Merediths' arrival, it was decided to have the church conference on Saturday before the first Lords' Day of each month.

Mr. Meredith evidentially served two pastorates in Edenton, NC. We have just discovered in the minutes of December, 1819, that a motion was made to receive Rev. Thomas Meredith by letter from a sister church in Edenton, NC. We know that he came from there when he began his second pastorate at New Bern Baptist Church.

As early as 1820, we have a record of a member going into the ministry. The minutes of February 5, 1820, record that Mr. Meredith is authorized to examine "one Mr. York", who considers himself fit to become a candidate for the ministry. He was approved.

Brother Stevenson was authorized to write a letter to Brother Meredith inviting him to continue his pastorate for another year.

From 1821 minutes, Brother Meredith and Brother Riggs

were appointed as a committee to call upon three members who had repeatedly missed church conferences.

We read that on more than one occasion Brother Meredith and others (usually two) were appointed delegates to the "Union Meeting". This, we believe, was a forerunner to our present day associational meetings.

The next and last mention of Thomas Merediths' first pastorate is from the minutes of the conference dated June 1, 1822. It says: "A squabble to request a letter of dismission was granted Rev. Meredith, our late pastor."

Even while Mr. Meredith served his first pastorate in New Bern he must have conceived the idea of publishing a Baptist periodical because he attempted, soon after, January 17, 1833, in Edenton, NC., when he edited and published the "North Carolina Baptist Interpreter." The next paper appeared January 4, 1834, in Edenton under the title "Biblical Recorder and Journal of Passing Events". No other issue appeared until after Thomas Meredith returned to New Bern.

Let's leave Rev. Meredith be and deal with the pastors and years before his recall to the New Bern Baptist Church in 1834.

It is notable that in the beginning we dissented from the "Kings Religion" but on January 2, 1824 we called a pastor from our mother country. Rev. Joseph Andress Warne, and his wife were received by letter from London, England January 31, 1824.

The call letter to Mr. Warne was a lengthy epistle dated January 1, 1824, and signed by J. C. Stevenson, church clerk. The letter indicated that the church has experienced some difficult times since the departure of Thomas Meredith two years before. Mr. Warne was offered the princely sum of \$500.00 a year if he would accept the call.

In an equally lengthy epistle Rev. Warne thanked the people for offering him and his family a place of service in the "Vineyard of the Lord."

In the minutes of this period, we learn that the church conferences were held in the home of members.

We note that now we have begun to list the amount of offering collected at the conferences. One reads: offering \$4.80, another, \$9.30.

The Church Covenant was revised again January 1, 1825. It is a very long document and too badly faded to read.

December 20, 1825, the church voted to continue to rent

the pews and to use the rental collected for the support of the pastor in the coming year.

In March of 1825, Mr. Warne was read a letter asking him to continue his pastorate for another year. This confirms our belief that pastors were, in fact, actually called from year to year. Perhaps there is a school of thought in that direction even today.

Upon Mr. Warnes' acceptance of the pastorate of the New Bern Baptist Church, he made one promise and one request: he agreed to preach two sermons each Lords day, and asked for leave of six Sabbaths in the autumn in order to return to his native land for a visit to his relatives.

We note that during the pastorate of Rev. Warne, most of the church conferences were held in his home. At one such conference a motion was made to appoint a committee of two to "wait upon any one who visited our house of worship, and lead them to their seats."

In October 1824, a dispute arose between two brethren, namely Willis and Willson, concerning a debt. The two members were brought in to have the church resolve the issue. Mr. Willson was ordered to pay the sum of \$1.00 monthly to Mr. Willis until he was "satisfied".

In the same conference, the church voted to pay \$2.00 toward the cost of printing the annual Neuse associational letter.

February 25, 1825 Brother Clark (founder) resigned as deacon and a special prayer meeting was held asking divine direction before replacing him.

Communion was changed to the first Lords' day every alternate month.

March 5, 1825, Rev. Warne replied to the church's letter inviting him to continue his pastorate another year.

In December the church decided, in conference, hereafter to hold conferences in the church rather than in the pastors home.

Over and over we read in the old minutes where members were "waited on" for being absent from the House of Worship. Would that we were so diligent today!

Rev. Warne resigned his charge April 1, 1826, and withdrew it June 3, saying that the cause for resigning had been removed.

There continued to be discord in the church, and in October Rev. Warne announced that he would resign at the end of the year.

On November 4, 1820, letters were granted to Rev. & Mrs. Warne to the Edgefield Baptist Church in South Carolina. So ends his pastorate, which was marked with no outstanding accomplishments.

In the interim, a committee, chose whom they saw fit to occupy the pulpit on the Lords day.

March 11, 1827, Rev. Samuel Wait was invited to stop and spend some weeks with us on his trip from the South. He became the next pastor of the New Bern Baptist Church.

In conference December 6, 1828, Pastor Wait withdrew himself in order that the church could vote on calling him for another year as pastor. He was to be paid \$400.00.

Dr. Wait distinguished himself as a pastor and as a leader in religious education. He was to become the first President of Wake Forest College, as well as President of Chowan College and Oxford Female Seminary.

It was in August, 1832, that Dr. Willian Hooper, who was to become pastor of New Bern's "New Brick Church", 1852-54, presented to the Baptist State Convention a report recommending the "establishment" of a Baptist Literary Institution in the state. This institution was to become Wake Forest Institute, Wake Forest College, and finally in 1967, Wake Forest University.

Four men, Dr. Hooper, Rev. Thomas Meredith, Rev. John Armstrong and Dr. Sammuel Wait were named to choose a president. The other three chose Dr. Wait.

Dr. Wait is said to have done more for the development of educational interests than any man in the state at any time in history.

After leaving New Bern, Dr. Wait was appointed the first general agent of the newly formed North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

In 1834, Dr. Wait began his work at Wake Forest Institute.

Lets' take time out for a side glance to see what Wake Forest was like in the beginning.

The costs to the students the first year were: Board and bedding \$6 per month—for washing, \$1. Languages, \$2. Every student had to bring an ax and a hoe, and be prepared to work three hours daily on the farm. No student could be under 12 years of age.

After a time the labor method was abolished, so students

became interested in games of sport. The "Walking Stick Papers" record the following: "A method was suggested to cure students of their fondness for baseball and football games. Call them work and make it obligatory to play and pay for it."

Brother John Armstrong was granted a letter of dismission from a sister church in Washington City, July 31, 1830 and received into the Baptist Church of New Bern, where he remained until 1834.

In the minutes of the period, we found no unusual events to distinguish Mr. Armstrong's ministry. A lot is said about Baptism. There are several instances of members being "waited upon" because of conduct unbecoming to a Christian brother. The church "accounts" were audited frequently.

A committee on repairs was elected in March, 1832. This committee reported progress at each meeting. The result will be mentioned later.

Of interest is this item from the minutes of June 3, 1832. "By his request, Abram, a negro belonging to Judge Dunwalk, was granted a letter of dismission that he may attach himself to a sister church in Hyde County."

In September 1832, Rev. Armstrong introduced a circular from the committee of the State Baptist Convention on the subject of establishing a Theological School in the state on the manual labor plan. The church pledged itself to the effort and voted to give \$100.00 in aid of the establishment of said Wake Forest Institution.

In December 1833, a negro woman named "Finny", belonging to Mrs. Smith, came before the church to be examined for baptism.

In Col. Whitford's historical papers, we found the following account, and we quote: "It was not until 1833, that the steeple was added to the Old Baptist Church Building. The galleries and the doors to the pews were completed and the pulpit put up, equaling any church in town."

The record further records that Craven County bought a new bell for the Court House and sold the old one to the Baptist Church. It broke soon after and a new one was purchased.

Rev. Armstrong left the pastorate of the New Bern Church to dedicate himself to raising subscriptions of \$1700.00 for a new dormitory at Wake Forest, where later for many years he was a professor.

Perhaps now is a good time to say that during our years of rich history, 42 men of God have served as pastors. Many of them distinguished themselves as famous leaders in the denomination. The average time served was two years. The longest pastorate was 11 years and the shortest less than a year.

May 10, 1834, Rev. Thomas W. Meredith was recalled as pastor of the New Bern Baptist Church and was tendered the sum of \$500.00 annual salary.

In the first conference after the arrival of Rev. Meredith the church voted to make the pews free for the ensuing year.

Brother and Sister Meredith were received by letter from the Baptist Church in Edenton, NC.

In two separate church conferences mention was made that Brother Meredith and one of his deacons were not in accord. A committee was appointed to investigate. In the final report a resolution was read: "Resolved that the pastor is responsible to the church alone for the official conduct, and no individual member is at liberty to call him to an account".

It was during this pastorate that Rev. Meredith began publication of the Biblical Recorder, an arm of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention.

After two attempts already mentioned, January 17, 1833 and January 4, 1834, to publish a Baptist Paper in Edenton, NC., Rev. Meredith's efforts were crowned with success in the publication of the Biblical Recorder in New Bern, January 7, 1835. Rev. Meredith was the editor and publisher.

The first notice of the birth of the Recorder was printed in the New Bern Spectator, Friday, January 9, 1835. It was described as a "fine weekly paper devoted to instruction, religious, literary, political and miscellaneous, at the low price of \$2.50 per year. The superior qualifications of the editor forbid a doubt of the usefulness and excellence of the Recorder".

Times were hard with the Recorder in the early years, but it has served triumphantly, as was attested to in August, 1982, in the celebration of its 150th year here in the First Baptist Church of New Bern, its birthplace. R. G. Puckett, the new editor who replaced Marse Grant, the retiring editor, spoke glowingly of its influence to the cause fostered by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.


Col. John D. Whitford has this to say in his "Walking Stick Papers"; "The building in which occurred the publication of

the Biblical recorder at New Bern was situated on the East side of East Front Street, half way between Union and King Streets, originally the store house of John Wright Stanley. The editors office had been Stanley's Counting Room."

The Recorder was printed on a rumbling hand press. The negro pressman, Virgil Jones, believed firmly that the public would never have seen the Biblical Recorder had it not been for him.

It seems unusual that the old church minutes of the time make no mention of the Biblical Recorder, nor Pastor Merediths efforts to record it.

On the following page is printed one of the first editorials appearing in the paper.



Vol. 149, No. 1

JANUARY 15, 1983

JOURNAL OF THE BAPTIST STATE CONVENTION OF NORTH CAROLINA

Biblical Recorder

Thomas Meredith Editorial

The following editorial was among the first appearing in a North Carolina Baptist paper written by Thomas Meredith from New Bern, N. C. The article appears exactly as originally published.

PROPOSALS.

It is now evidently important that the Baptists of this State should have a *weekly paper*. The reasons are so obvious, and have been so often stated, that it is unnecessary here to repeat them.—Suffice it to say, that we now again propose to issue a *weekly newspaper*, of the description, and on the terms, stated below.

The *Biblical Recorder* and *Journal of passing events* shall be published weekly, commencing January 1835, on a handsome *Imperial Sheet*, (about one third larger than the specimen heretofore exhibited,) and shall be devoted to original Essays and Criticisms; to Missionary and other Religious intelligence; to Moral and Literary selections; to a synopsis of the Passing Events of the day, including mercantile, agricultural, legislative, and miscellaneous items; and, in a moderate degree, to such advertisements as suit the character of the paper. The plan of the publication has been arranged with special reference to *pious families* residing in the country and elsewhere, and is designed to supply them with reading matter, both of a religious and miscellaneous cast, which will be at once entertaining, instructive, and convenient. From the facilities we shall possess, and the experience we have had, we presume to think that we shall be able to present our readers with a production inferior, in no important respect, to any of its contemporaries.

The charge for the Recorder will be \$2.50 per annum, payable within six months, or \$3.00 payable at the end of the year. As we are confident that the terms now stated are actually lower than we can justly afford, considering the amount of patronage we shall have, we shall expect a strict compliance on the part of subscribers; and in those cases in which payment shall be delayed beyond six months, whatever the cause may be, we shall calculate on receiving not less than \$3.00.

Any person ordering six copies, or procuring six responsible subscribers, shall be entitled to a *seventh copy gratis*.

No subscription will be received for less than one year, and none will be discontinued until arrears shall be paid.

All communications except those of Agents who act *gratuitously*, must be *post paid*.

All Agents for the Interpreter, all Baptist Ministers, and all Post Masters favourably disposed, in this or the neighboring States, are authorized and requested to act as Agents for the Recorder.

Editor

Serving Southern Baptists of North Carolina for 150 years

On December 5, 1835, Brother Meredith introduced the subject of building a new church, and requested a committee be appointed to ascertain the expediency and practicability. Brethern Hunter, Stevenson, Sanders, Riggs, Slade were appointed. At every meeting thereafter, progress was noted.

Rev. Meredith, an austere man though naturally dignified was always bold and open and rarely lost control of his temper. This was not true on a Sunday afternoon in late 1835. He had risen to his feet to deliver a well-prepared sermon. Just as he began to speak with unusual earnestness, a little boy, son of simple minded, good hearted parents, seated in the front pew began to turn and rattle the pages of a Sunday School book, distracting the speaker. His face flushed, he lost his temper, lifted his eyes and hands heavenward, and dismissed the congregation! Nothing was said then, now or ever! All retired slowly, but it was said that the incident caused Brother Meredith trouble for the remainder of his days spent in New Bern. He also advocated that a separate section in the rear of the Meeting House be kept for latecomers so they would not disrupt the services.

Rev. Meredith conceived the idea of a Baptist Women's College. From that idea Meredith College, which bears his name, was born.

June 4, 1836, Thomas Meredith resigned the pastorate of the New Bern Baptist Church, going to Raleigh taking the Biblical Recorder with him where it has remained ever since.

The descendents of Dr. Thomas Meredith who belong to our church today are: Carol Harker White and her son, and Doris Harker Garner and her daughter.

Perhaps we should pause here and go back to March 2, 1830 when the Baptist State Convention was formed at which time Thomas Meredith presented the constitution. Former pastor Biddle was elected first Vice-President, and John Armstrong, also a former pastor, was chosen to be the Corresponding Secretary.

Another glance back at the times is a notation in the minutes of the same period, that the new sexton, recently hired, was to receive \$1.50 a month for his services.

A special church conference was called January 30, 1838 to consider the prospect of calling Rev. Josiah J. Finch to the pastoral charge of the church. A motion was made to extend the call, and a committee was appointed to raise subscriptions

that the church might know at the next regular meeting what amount they could furnish Rev. Finch for his support if he would accept the call. Elijah Clark was chairman of the committee.

It was also at this time that a letter of dismissal was granted to Brother and Sister Meredith to join a sister church in Raleigh, NC.

February 3, 1838, Rev. Finch was extended a call to the pastorate of New Bern Baptist Church at a salary of \$500.00 annually with one condition----that should he accept, either party would give the other three months notice of any dissatisfaction that might arise previous to a dissolution of the union.

Brother Finch accepted the call and began his pastorate.

However it was not until June 30, 1838, that his church letter was received from a sister church in Edenton, NC.

In July of the same year, the minutes record that one Francis Hancock was "waited upon" by the church. Since the trouble could not be resolved, the name was "crossed" from the church roll.

June 9, 1838, the church voted to dispense with Sabbath Day evening services for the time being.

All through the early years we read where meetings, union meetings, association, state or what have you were always attended by duly elected delegates, taking reports or letters as was necessary. Usually, three brethren were appointed to attend.

Several times in this period of 1838 to 1844, we read of "special" conferences for the concern of delinquent members, and how to deal with them. Perhaps this method should also be relevant to the 20th century in which we live.

July 8, 1841, Mrs. Sally Jenkins was accepted for baptism. There is a marble plaque to her memory in the church today.

On July 19, 1841 there was a special conference to raise subscriptions to increase the pastors financial support. We can find no record of an increase.

February 5, 1842, Brother Finch asked that Brother Riggs take the chair in order that he might speak at length on a subject of grave importance, RE: The subject of a New House of Worship. He cited many reasons for the need among which were:

1. Present House of Worship inconveniently located.
2. Badly arranged for both speaker and hearers.
3. Too small.
4. Too old.
5. Badly in need of repairs which the condition will not justify.
6. That the spiritual life of the community would be greatly improved with a new building.
7. We will make an effort in dependence on Divine aid to erect a neat temple of worship worthy of the town.
8. That trustees (5) be appointed to immediately take subscriptions until sufficient amount is collected to justify an application.

The following resolution in the same meeting is very important:

“That the subscriber shall be entitled to vote on the appropriation of the money and the appointment of the building committee in the following way---Everyone who subscribes \$10.00 to \$50.00 shall be allowed 1 vote----every additional \$50.00, an extra vote.”

All motions were tabled until the next meeting.

All of the foregoing statements we record here to show you that the desire of Rev. Finch was to build a new church, and even though he did not remain to see it built, he remained deeply interested in its progress while he lived in Raleigh, and was grieved when ill health prevented his sharing in its dedication in the summer of 1848.

In January, 1843, there was recorded the fact that Brother Clark was appointed to call upon every church member for their subscription toward the building of a new church.

In February of 1843, The Temperance Society was granted permission to continue meeting in our Meeting House.

In July, 1843, the church voted in conference to remove names of any member who had not attended, nor had any contact with the church, in a 12 month period.

November 30, 1844, Josiah Finch resigned his pastorate, saying that the salary was inadequate for his support. He continued to write to members, (mainly Mr. Stevenson) telling of his enjoyment as he labored among them and regretting that he was unable to remain to see his dream of the new church to its fruition.

January 27, 1845, the Baptist Church voted to increase the pastors salary and write Rev. Finch a letter, recalling him to the pastorate. No further record has been found concerning it.

On a church program of The Sesquicentennial Celebration of May 10-15, 1959, there is a listing of all the church pastors

who have served the New Bern (First) Baptist Church. W. L. Hartson is listed as the minister in 1845. We have diligently searched all available church records as well as Col. Whitfords "Walking Stick Papers." Nowhere is the name W. L. Hartson mentioned.

So, we must leave him be and pass on to Rev. Richard Furman, Jr., who served as pastor during 1846-47.

February 11, 1846, Brethren Clark, Slade and Stevenson were chosen as a committee to raise money to defray Brother Richard Furmans traveling expense to visit the church in view of becoming the pastor. In April, Rev. Furman accepted the responsibility at a salary of \$800.00 annually--the largest amount paid to any pastor up to this time.

At the church conference of May 2, 1846, Brother and Mrs. Furman were accepted into the fellowship of the church by letter from a sister church in Cheraw, South Carolina.

A motion was made that the New Bern Baptist Church send a letter of sympathy to the sister church at Cheraw, South Carolina, for the breavement caused them in the removal of Rev. Furman from that place.

At this conference, Rev. Furman's negro, Robert, was also accepted into the church by letter of dismissal from Cheraw.

Even though Rev. Furman remained as pastor of the New Bern Baptist Church only fourteen months, his name was to be added to the long list of educators who served the church during the long years of history. Furman University was named for him.

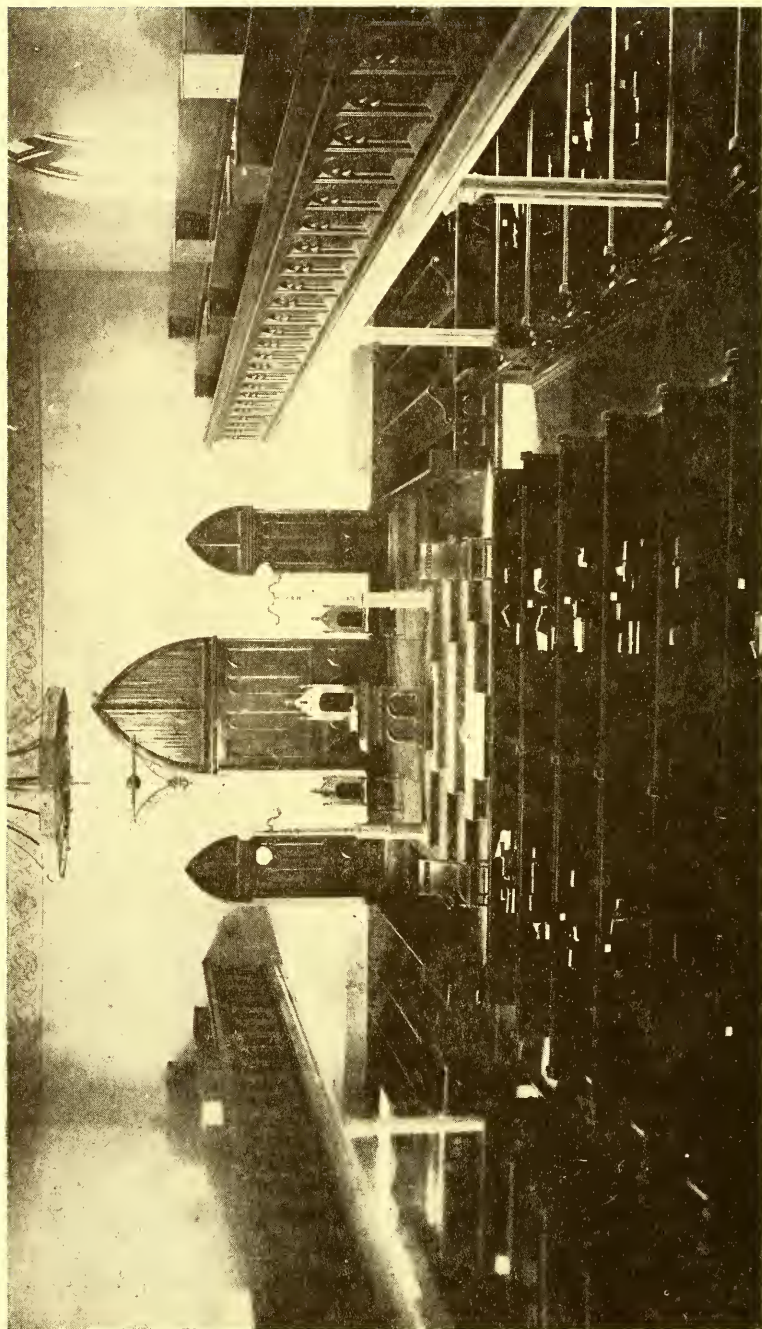
It seems odd that we hear so little of the "New Brick Church" at this time.

Certainly plans were underway if the actual construction had not begun.

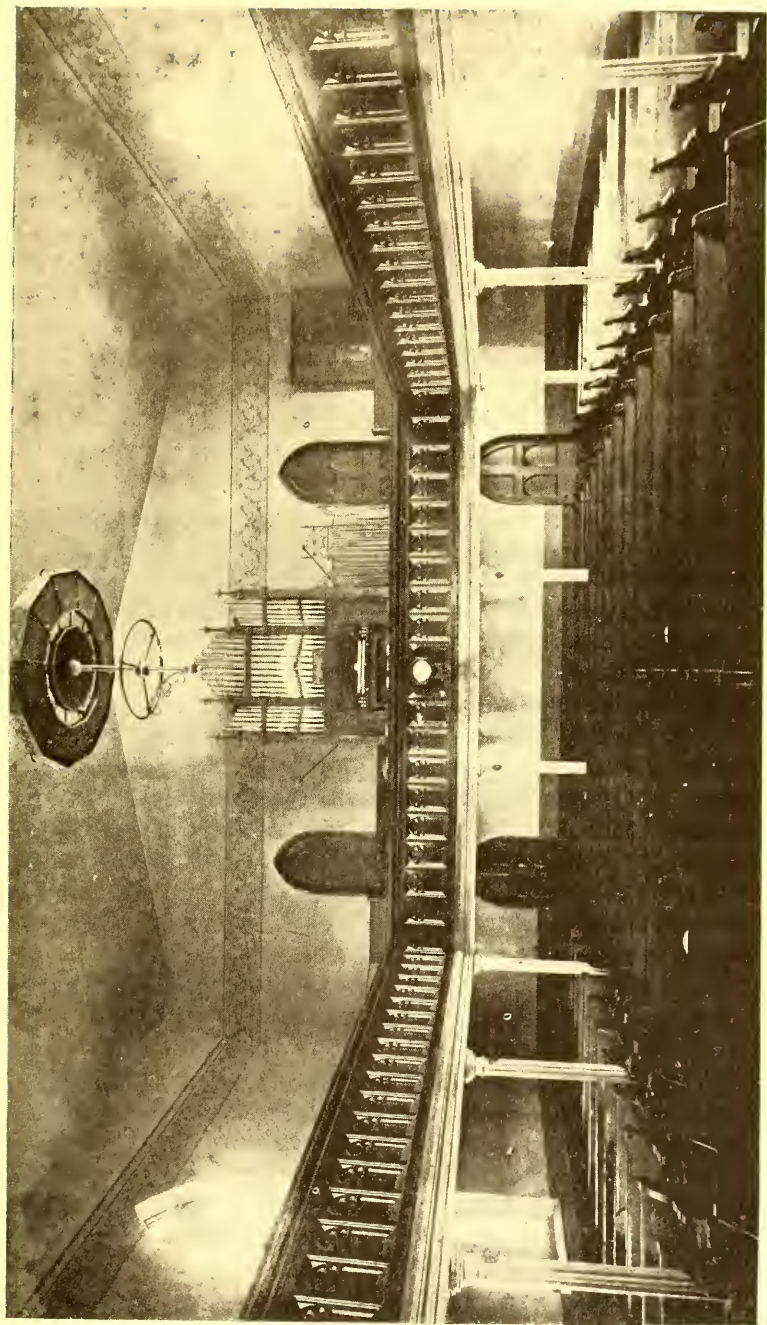
Neither the minutes of the period, nor Col. Whitfords historic papers record any day to day type accounts of the progress made.

We recall that the "Old Church" was very particular in choosing the site, since they had never felt that the first location was the perfect choice.

The deed to the Middle Street lot was transferred from Dr. John R. Justice, April 7, 1845, to James Riggs, Elijah Clark, James C. Stevenson, Alonza F. Jenkins, Alexander Mitchel and Edward R. Stanley, "Trustees of the Regular Baptist Church of New Bern." The purchase price was \$1000.00.



FRONT VIEW OF INTERIOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1900



REAR VIEW OF INTERIOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1900

The old records state that there was such diversity of opinion as to the style of the building, that Elijah Clark, fearful of further delay, slipped off to New York on a vessel commanded by Baptist Brother James Jones.

In New York Mr. Clark obtained from Thomas & Son, Baptists and architects of prominence at that time, a plan for the church building. It cost \$12,000.00 to build.

There was already erected on Madison Avenue, a church of the same Gothic revival style.

The plans were accepted, but Col. Whitfords "Walking Stick Papers" record that there was much discontentment between the local architect (we think he must have meant contractor) and Thomas & Sons. There was much discussion about the "arches" and "plaster moulding" as well as a niche for the organ. One committee member remarked, "Why worry about that---we don't have an organ."

The seating of the edifice, including the galleries, was to accommodate 600 souls.

History certainly repeats itself! In 1847, the members were "squabbling" about the type of pews to be installed. Col. Whitford, a member of the church went to New York, had a pew made and shipped out at his own expense. Without dissent from any quarter, the other pews were made like it and nothing more was heard about pews!

The period between the pastorates of Rev. Furman and Rev. Martin R. Forey was the shortest interim in the history of the church, about three months. June 22, 1847, Mr. Forey was extended a call. He accepted the call but did not preach his first sermon until the Lord's Day, September 20, 1847. He was to lead the church through the transition into the new church. His salary was \$800.00 annually.

At each meeting (conference) the rules of decorum and the church covenant continued to be read.

In a conference dated December 4, 1847, Rev. Forey presented his dismissal from the Wentworth St. Baptist Church in Charlotte, North Carolina and was accepted as a member of the New Bern Baptist Church.

According to the minutes of May 3, 1848, it seems that one Sister Mary Lindsey had objected to recognizing one Mrs. Gifford for baptism and membership into the church. A committee was appointed to investigate the objections.

At the same conference, a resolution was passed that six

appointed persons were to contact Rev. Thomas W. Meredith and invite him to visit a short time hence for the purpose of preaching the dedication sermon at the New Baptist Church when completed.

May 31, 1848, Brother Brinson resigned as a deacon and Brother Elijah Clark resigned as a trustee. Both were founding fathers of the church.

Additional persons were added to the arrangements committee for the dedication of the new church.

Announcement was made that the new hymnals had arrived and could be "picked up" at the store of Brother James Brinson.

Male members of the church were to have a special meeting regarding the choice of a new trustee.

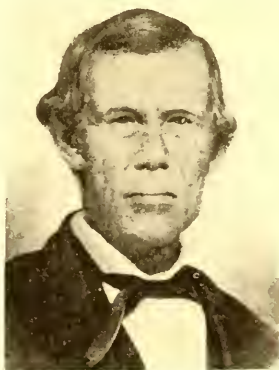
The question of renting pews arose again. 49 voted yes, 48 voted no.

We found recorded in the "Walking Stick Papers" an interesting side glance regarding Rev. Forey. It was said that he was a "slow" man but was constantly looking beyond passing events. While in New Bern he made a public address at the Odd Fellows Hall, a few steps south of the church. In his address he predicted that the time was close when electricity would supercede gas and other lights in the cities and on vessels on the ocean; that it would also be utilized for running engines and used for other purposes not yet dreamed of. Mr. Forey was put down as a crank of the first order, being so told by sincere friends and Baptist Brothers.

HONORED DEACON

For Forty Years

Mr. Slade was solely responsible for Baptist worship during the Civil War years (1862-1865); and for locating the membership and re-organizing the church after the war.



ZACCHAEUS SLADE

1799-1876

“The New Brick Church”

We find no account of the dedication of the “New Brick Church” except that it occurred July 2, 1848. Since Dr. Thomas W. Meredith was invited to do so, we have to assume that he preached the dedication sermon. Earlier minutes show that Rev. Josiah J. Finch, pastor from 1838-44, was also invited to attend.

Rev. Forey resigned August 14, 1848, to be effective at the close of the pastoral year.

Now that the “Old” Baptists are settled and worshipping in the “New Brick Church”, let’s leave the ministers for a time and take time out for some further interesting side glances.

We have had little to say about the three founders of the “Old Baptist Church”, so perhaps we should take a longer look beginning with Elijah Clark, in whose home the meeting was held.



FOUNDING FATHER

It was in Mr. Clark’s home at the intersection of Middle and Graves (Craven) Streets that the church was organized.

ELIJAH CLARK
1774-1862

He was born in New Bern, November 8, 1774.

In the records of the Baptist Church, his name was mentioned more frequently than that of any other man at anytime in the history. He was a deacon and a trustee, and according to Col. John Whitford's Walking Stick Papers, he was the most generous contributor in his lifetime, and at his death. (The Walking Stick Papers were written in the 19th Century).

He was a trustee (Treasurer) of Craven County; he ran for Sheriff. Through his efforts the city purchased the town clock in 1827 for \$794.00. He had a lucrative business as a carriage maker.

It never was characteristic of Mr. Clark to "half do" anything. He was the father of ten children!!

He fled the city during 1862 (Civil War) going to Graham in Alamance County, where he died June 19, 1862, at the age of 88 years. His earthly remains were brought back to New Bern and interred in Cedar Grove Cemetery, almost under the morning shadow of the Old Baptist Church, to mingle with the dust of those whom he loved.

Earlier, we stated that Catherine Waters Crowe is a descendant.

Mr. John Brinson, a second founding father, never had a permanent residence in New Bern. He lived on a plantation on Neuse River. According to old minutes, he was much involved in the affairs of the church. He was a deacon until he resigned around 1846 or 1847. He was the grandfather of Dr. Thomas H. Pritchard, and the great-grand-father of James and Samuel Brinson. Samuel Brinson is remembered as a great educator, and long-time clerk of the First Baptist Church.

We have searched diligently, and can find no decendants of his today among our church family.

Now, to Mary Willis Mitchel, the third founder.

She was born in New Bern in 1779. She married Joshua Mitchel November 28, 1799 and she died in 1853 at the age of 74. Mr. Mitchel was born in 1770, and died in 1834 at age 64. The Mitchel name is woven into the church history, but we know few specifics. Through local contact with the Mitchel historian Liza Mitchell Arnold, who obtained a family historical record from Stephen Mitchel of Virginia, we have learned that Mrs. Mary Willis Mitchel is a great, great, great aunt of Thomas J. (Buzz) Mitchel, III, who is a member of our church today.

We know that Mary Willis Mitchel was a Godly woman 'til the day the Great Master called her to her reward.

This paragraph we stumbled upon mixed with other subjects in Col. Whitford's historic writings. We quote: "Referring once more to Miss Susan Mitchel, who was the last surviving child of Mary Willis Mitchel - around such a mother's knee were her habits of holiness found so soon transfered into her mothers' unfaltering faith and now both gone to their final reward. What could be fitter than the membership of the Old Meeting House should so end - One, the foundation, the other, the crowning stone, Women first and last there."

Miss Susan Mitchel was baptized by Rev. Finch in 1840.

You have observed by this time that we are attempting to record these facts in the vernacular of the times, thinking that it will make for more interesting reading.

Up to this point we have had nothing to say about music except that every meeting was opened with prayer and praise. So let us look at the music program of the "Old Baptist Church". The minutes have nothing recorded up to the time the "New Brick Church" was dedicated July 2, 1848. Col. John Whitford, in his Historic Papers, gives us the information we have relative to music.

The first musical instrument ever used in the church was a harmonica given or loaned by Mr. John Washington, on which Mrs. Stevenson performed with skill. The harmonica was in that day a wonder, and especially a wonder to be allowed in church .

Next came the bass viol for which only a few hands were raised. However, the instrument was accepted when members were reminded that the Holy Scriptures said "Let us Praise the Lord with stringed instruments".

During this period in the history of the church , an English music teacher named Silas Statham, a master in his profession, was in New Bern and would gratuitously play the bass viol in the church Choir. It is interesting that Mr. Statham came to New Bern from Edenton, N.C. to instruct a band of young men. So often we seem to have some connection with Edenton. Mr. Statham also is said to have played an instrument of "tumblers".

We have such a musical instrument in our Archives today. Up to this point in time we have not discovered exactly when it was used. We do know that for many, many years it was

kept by Mrs. Tillie Metts Lewis, a faithful member, in her home. She died in the 1930's, and after her death, the instrument was brought to the church. Only a few of the tumblers have been broken.

Later, when we begin recording the 20th Century, we will discuss in depth the music of today which includes trained, graded choirs, music director, organist, pipe organ, pianos, handbells, and occasionally stringed and wind instruments.

Now that the Old Baptists are happily settled and enjoying worshipping in the new brick church on downtown Middle St., it would seem timely that some disposition should be made of the Old Church Meeting House.

We are researching that subject at this time, and will address ourselves to it later on in the recording of these pages of history.

At this point, we shall return to Rev. Martin R. Forey and his resignation as pastor Aug. 14, 1848. You will recall that it was to be effective at the end of the pastoral year. Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1848, just before his pastorate was to end, the male members called a special meeting for the purpose of recalling Rev. Forey for another year. He considered the matter until Dec. 20, 1849, when a letter of dismissal was granted to Rev. M. R. Forey, to the Tabernacle Baptist Church in New York City.

It is interesting to note that several times it was recorded in the 19th and early 20th Century minutes that "male members", or that "only male members voted". It is finally in the last quarter of the 20th Century that female members appear to be of equal status, and enjoy equal privileges.

We are thinking of the privilege of serving as deacons, which we shall introduce at a later time.

After the departure of Rev. Forey, there was the usual situation when the church corresponded with several individuals relative to choosing a new pastor.

From Rev. Furman, a former pastor, came a glowing recommendation for Rev. J. M. C. Breaker of Greenville, S. C. He was to be called to the pastorate Feb. 6, 1849.

Again, side glances at a church conference of Oct. 9, 1848. Brother R. McCoy presented himself before the church to acknowledge his faults publicly and to express a desire to return to the church. He was duly accepted.

At the same meeting Bro. J. A. Hancock resigned as church clerk.

Members were asked to contribute one cent a week to the Itinerant Fund of the Association.

At the same meeting, the formation of a "Tract Society" was again discussed.

Jan. 31, 1849, at a special called meeting Bro. Stevenson moved that the Board of Trustees be authorized to make a loan for the purpose of liquidating the debt incurred in building the brick church. The motion was carried.

Feb. 10, 1849, Brother Breaker was officially called to the pastorate of the New Bern Baptist Church.

March 1, 1849, Bro. J. M. C. Breaker and his wife Emma J. Breaker were received by letter from a church in Greenville, S. C.

At a church conference dated Mar. 31, 1849, Brother Elijah Clark moved that a committee of three be appointed along with the pastor and church clerk to obtain a new "Church Book", and to examine and "draw off" all the resolutions now in force in the "Old Book", and "lay them" before the church at the next meeting. It was carried.

Col. Whitford in his papers had this to say about Rev. Breaker. We quote: "Rev. Breaker, after leaving New Bern became a very distinguished preacher in a southern state, as did his son Rev. Manley Breaker. Rev. Breaker was founder of the Confederate Baptist at Columbia, S. C."

The following items from the minutes of Sept. 2, 1849, we found to be of interest. Mary Lindsey appears in the limelight again. (We've read before that she was "waited upon" because of her religious conduct.) It seems that again she had had several unexplained absencies for which she was again sorry, and promises to attend church regularly hereafter.

Sisters Tempie Green and Caroline Ethridge had "joined up" with the Christians, but it appears that Sister Green was sorry she had done so; had now withdrawn from them and desires to return to the Baptist Church.

Sept. 30, 1849, the Pastor Bro. Breaker called a special meeting, the object of which was to adopt some definite expressions of our faith as a Baptist Church; whereupon the following resolution was unanimously adopted: Resolved: That it is expedient to have some definite expression of our principles as a Baptist Church in order that we may be known as such, we do agree to adopt for this purpose, the Articles of Faith which are herewith printed - - -

DECLARATION OF FAITH NEWBERN BAPTIST CHURCH ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 30th 1849

- I. Of the Scriptures. We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; That it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.
- II. Of the true God. That there is one, and only one, true and living God, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness; worth of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and excellences distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.
- III. Of the Fall of Man. That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.
- IV. Of the Way of Salvation. That the Salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all sufficient Savior.
- V. Of Justification. That the great Gospel blessing, which Christ of his fulness bestows on such a belief in Him, is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of Sin and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.
- VI. Of the Freeness of Salvation. That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.
- VII. Of Grace in Regeneration. That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consist in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

- VIII. Of God's Purpose of Grace. That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it Forever exc'udes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and invitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it is ascertained by its affects in all who believe the Gospel; is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.
- IX. Of the Perseverance of Saints. The such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over thier welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.
- X. Harmony of the Law and Gospel. The law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just, and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arise entirely from thier love of Sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to The Total obedience to the holy law, is one great and of the Gospel and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.
- XI. Of a Gospel Church. That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are bishops or pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.
- XII. Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. That Christian baptism is the immersion of a bleiever in water, in the name of the Father, the Son and Spirit; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its purifying power; that it is pre-requisite to the priveleges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.
- XIII. Of the Christian Sabbath. That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that rest which remaineth for the people of God.
- XIV. Of Civil Government. That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.
- XV. Of the Righteous and the Wicked. That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem, while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

XVI. Of the World to Come. That the end of this world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grace to final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgement will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

We note that in Dec., 1849, a special meeting was called three times before there were sufficient members present to proceed with the election of trustees. The following were elected: Alexander Mitchel, M. A. Outten, J. C. Stevenson, James McBrinson and Charles Kelley.

It is interesting that in the old days, the membership was smaller, but they always had more trustees, (In 1983 we have three).

Dec. 27, same year, a committee of eleven, including the trustees, was appointed to liquidate the debt on the new brick church.

Jan. 27, 1850, resolutions of respect were drawn for Rev. J. J. Finch, a former pastor who died in Raleigh, N. C.

Every business meeting; the "Debt Committee" continued to report progress.

Feb. 24, 1850, it was reported that Sister Riggs had caused the death of Lewis, a servant belonging to Mrs. Vail. A committee of five honorable brethren were appointed to investigate.

Mar. 24, 1850, it was decided that hereafter the collection for the poor would be taken only on Communion Sunday.

April 28, 1850, in special session, Sister Riggs was excluded from the church because of having killed the servant Lewis; and because she showed no evidence of penitence, and failed to acknowledge her improper conduct to the church.

June 16, 1850, St. John's Masonic Lodge #3 requested the use of the church for the purpose of celebrating the anniversary of St. John the Baptist. The request was granted.

Nov. 3, 1850, the Newbern Division #37 of the Sons of Temperance asked for use of the church for them and the public to hear the distinguished P. S. White. The request was granted if they would pay the expense of "lighting up"!

Nov. 17, 1850 the church called a special meeting in consequence of the death of Brother Thomas Meredith in Raleigh. Resolutions of respect were duly drawn. The Pastor Rev. Breaker delivered a sermon on the occasion of his death.

We note from the minutes of 1850 that deacons were rotated

pretty much as we do them today.

In 1851 we find recorded the same sentence: "The Committee to liquidate the debt on the church report progress" again!

It is commendable that the Old Baptists were faithful in their attendance at meetings of the denomination on every level. Over and over the minutes record that brethren so and so were elected as delegates to attend the Association meeting, or what ever the assembly happened to be. Delegates were always elected by the church, never appointed.

Our church now had served in the vinyard of the Lord for forty-two years, so we begin to note that the faithful were being called to their heavenly reward. We notice it more frequently than in the early days. We were growing older. In one 1850 minutes we noted the passing of Bro. Wilson and the extreme sickness of Bro. William D. O'Leary.

Again, we noted that the Rules of Government (Decorum) have again been revised. We have compared the articles with earlier ones, and note very little change; some few articles were added.

Article VI: in addition to the usual Thursday evening prayer meeting there will be held a Missionary Prayer service each first Monday evening in the month.

VIII: it shall be the duty of members of the church not to speak of the private affairs of the church to any who are not members.

IX: the first section of the rules of government shall be read to each applicant for membership, and his assent to same obtained, in order for his reception.

In the old book of minutes dated 1848 to 1870, on the first three pages were listed the names of members, totaling 121. We have to assume that to be the membership in 1848.

Included in the minutes of Mar. 16, 1851 was a statement that the Debt Liquidation Committee reported progress. On a separate sheet, attached was a "Committe on Church Debt" report. It said in part "note renewed bal. due to date \$487.00". It was signed by Z. Slade for J. McBrinson.

In a church conference dated Aug. 2, 1851 a motion was made by Bro. Stevenson to erect a marble tablet on the walls of the church in loving memory of James Riggs, a loyal deacon. The church so ordered and the tablet was erected. Later, a memorial tablet to Mrs. Alonza T. Jerkins, and B. M. Gates

were also erected.

Today, June 5, 1983, these old markers are among the possessions of the church, but they no longer grace the walls, to my sorrow.

Sept. 22, 1851, records show that Brother Clark, Brinson and Slade were given notes with interest for the money they had paid the Merchants Bank on behalf of the church .

On the same day, Rev. Breaker announced that the copies of the sermon on the occasion of the death of Rev. Thomas Meredith had arrived.

In Nov. 1851, a meeting was called relative to placing a fence around the church property.

A wood picket fence was later built in 1853. It was to be replaced years later with a fine wrought iron fence which remains today as a memorial to Mrs. G. C. Patterson.

Dec. 7, 1851, the pastor resigned by letter, effective at the close of the pastoral year!

Now as we leave the retiring pastor as he returns to S. C. and we await the arrival of a new one, let us look at the disposal of the Old Baptist Meeting House, and the hallowed ground on which it had stood for forty years.

It seems quite strange to us that no mention of the disposal of the old church was made in the minutes recorded at the time.

We researched the subject and found the following information among the wealth of old records available in the Craven County Court House.

In Deed Book number 60, page 254, dated January 21, 1851 is recorded the transfer of the church and the land lot #416 on which it is situated from the Baptist Trustees J. C. Stevenson, James McBrinson, and Alexander Mitchel to William B. Wellons, William P. Moore, Robert Harvey and James Armstrong, trustees of the Christian Church of New Bern, N. C. for the sum of \$600.00. A copy of the abstract from the deed follows.

A copy of the hand written deed in the legal terminology of the period can be seen in the Archives room of The First Baptist Church. Here is the abstract:

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
DEED BOOK 60 Page 254
January 21, 1851

James C. Stevenson, Alexander Mitchell, James McBrinson,

trustees for the Baptist Church of Newbern, County of Craven and State of North Carolina on the one part, and William B. Wellons, William P. Moore, Robert Harvey, and James Armstrong, trustees for the Christian Church of New Bern, on the other. . . . for \$600.00.

Lot of land and church situate in the Town of Newbern in the County and State aforesaid and bounded as follows;

On the North and North East by Queen Street on the East by Metcalf Street and on the South of Johnston Street, and designated in the plan of Newbern by number 416 with all privileges and appurtenances to the said tenement or lot and church J. C. Stevenson, Jas. McBrinson, and Alex. Mitchell. In Presence of: Z. Slade.

Feb. 10, 1877, the Old Baptist Church was again sold.

The trustees of the Christian Church sold the property for the sum of \$346.00 to the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Diocese of North Carolina.

In Gertrude Carraway's book "The Crown of Life", she records that the permanent St. Cyprians Black Episcopal Church was begun soon after the War Between the States. The church continues its' ministry today on the same location, a brick edifice having been erected many years ago. Many New Bernians remember with great respect and admiration the late R. I. Johnson, longtime rector who served the church and the community from the thirties probably until his retirement or his death.

Now, may we take time to look briefly at some of the old relics.

There are many old pictures in the archives room, most of them having been a part of a collection belonging to Mrs. Tillie Lewis, a faithful member. We have added to the collection two enlarged prints of the old church, and the present church building as it looked many years ago.

An old Britannia Ware Communion Set, which may be the first owned by the church, is in the archives room. It contains a tall wine tankard, a tray, two bread plates and two cups.

An old mahogany table with a marble top, which was used for a communion table, is now in the ladies' parlor. It was given by an ancestor of representative S. M. Brinson.

We have mentioned earlier the three marble markers and the old musical instrument of glass tumblers.

Also, in the archives are the following furnishings: an old

pulpit which we believe could have come from the old church. It has recently come home after being used in the Smyrna Baptist Church for a long period. There is a beautiful old desk and two chairs. We have been unable to secure any factual information on them.

The old pulpit and chairs which were used in the new brick church until 1943 are now being used in the Battle Ground (Neuse River) Church. The furniture was used for a time in the National Ave. Baptist Church that First Baptist Church began as a mission.

At a called conference of the church recorded April 21, 1852, Dr. William Hooper was called to the pastorate of the church. He came from Raleigh, N. C.

Earlier, in the discussion about Wake Forest, we mentioned that then Rev. Hooper had recommended the establishment of a Baptist Literary Institution in the state, and he later became president.

The minutes say nothing about discord concerning Dr. Hooper, but Col. Whitford (a member and historian) had much to say on the subject. He said about a score of old members, including Elijah Clark and Rev. Breaker, who had not yet left, signed a protest against him. It seems that fewer than a score of years before, Dr. Hooper, with other distinguished Episcopal clergymen, had presided at Christ Episcopal Church for the ordination of a minister.

Col. Whitford says that, "He was a man of high education and piety. It is evident that he was afraid to remain (he had preached open or close communion doctrine-) yet unwilling when coming over to the Baptist for additional safety to trust their creed only in part".

One old time Baptist had this to say: "Throw open your doors and invite all denominations to come up to the communion table, and how many would it add to your membership worth having!"

Dr. Hooper's strongest support came from the fact of his eminent scholarly attainments. He was a great preacher. He was the grandson of William Hooper, who signed the Declaration of Independence.

Before Dr. Hooper arrived at the church, subscriptions were raised to the amount of \$500.00 toward his salary, and they hoped to raise \$800.00.

In the minutes of June 5, \$600.00 had been raised and Dr.

Hooper accepted the pastoral duty for that specified amount.

Then, again, a special meeting was called to resolve the difference which the occasion of the Hooper protest had caused. There was a two page discussion concerning it, and it seemed that the protest meeting was held without authority. The ill feelings had now been forgotten.

July 31, 1852, was a time of change! A rule was adopted requiring the Sisters and the colored members to attend the church conferences.

In the conference of Sept. 16, 1852, again, \$5.00 was given to the Foreign Mission Fund, and a collection was taken for the Domestic Mission Fund.

It was not until Feb. 5, 1853, that the letter of dismission for Dr. William and Mrs. Frances Hooper was received from Raleigh. They were accepted as members of the New Bern Baptist Church. We wonder why the letter was so late in arriving.

At this time a special church conference was held after the morning Lord's day worship for the purpose of dealing with delinquent members. Resolutions were adopted dealing with the matter.

Dr. William Hooper resigned his pastorate July 16, 1854. His resignation was accepted after he had given his reasons.

In a financial report of this time, the following sums were sent to the association:

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Foreign Missions | \$30.00 |
| Domestic Missions | \$10.00 |
| Incidental Expense | \$5.00 |

April 16, 1855, a special conference was called for the purpose of inviting Rev. J. S. Walthall of Richmond, Virginia to pay a visit to the church. He had been recommended by Rev. I. L. Ramsey. Rev. Walthall arrived in New Bern May 3 and agreed to preach the following Lord's Day morning.

After hearing him preach, the church extended the call which he accepted, at a salary of \$600.00 per year.

Resolutions were drawn, saying that the church believed Rev. Walthall to have been sent by the Great Shepherd. The Rules of Government were called for and read.

Oct. 3, 1855, a letter of dismission from the church in Richmond, Va., was received for Rev. Walthall and his wife Matilda. They were received into the church in proper order.

May 3, 1856, again the Rules of Government were being

revised. In the same meeting a motion was made that copies of a recent sermon preached by the pastor on the subject of "Communion" be made available to the Biblical Recorder. The motion was carried.

There is evidence that the church was growing. At every conference it was noted that a person or persons were being received into the church.

Please note the use of the word "Dismission". Of course we use "Dismissal" instead today.

March 4, 1857, we note that the books of the church treasurer were audited, found to be in order, and showed a cash balance of \$393.82.

It is unfortunate that the church minutes of this period are hardly legible. The church clerk, who did not sign the minutes, was also poor in penmanship. Some pages are more faded than others.

Col. John Whitford in his "Walking Stick Papers" mentions Rev. Walthall only twice, which we will relate later.

May 27, 1857, Elijah Clark and three members of his family petitioned by letter to be restored to membership in the church. It appears that for a period of about two years they had resided in Washington, N. C.

It is not usually a good idea to mention names for fear of overlooking one of great importance. However, we feel inclined to mention names of persons whose lives were molded and woven in the events of the Baptist Church in the first half of the 19th century. We recall:

| | |
|-----------|---------|
| Clark | Riggs |
| Brinson | Gates |
| Mitchel | Stanley |
| Slade | Whaley |
| Stevenson | Lewis |
| Whitford | Metts |
| Kelly | White |
| Hancock | O'leary |
| Jenkins | Simpson |
| Simpson | Stanley |
| Ballenger | Holland |
| Jenkins | |

At a later time we shall remember some of the devout 20th Century Christians who made contributions to the church through their fine Christian examples.

In July 1857, Rules were again being revised. One article reads: "This church does regard baby sprinkling a sin, and

any member practicing same shall be subject for discipline”.

In the Dec. 1857 church conference, a postscript records that Sisters Riggs and Allen were not at peace with each other and a committee was appointed to investigate.

June 20, 1858 at a special called conference, Rev. J. S. Walthall read his letter of resignation. It was accepted but he agreed to remain until July. He did not leave then, as we shall see later. A committee of six was elected to secure a pastor to replace him.

Dec. 6, 1858 the church offered the Methodists the use of the Baptist Church for their conference since theirs was too small to accomodate the crowds.

The Baptist Church was secured for the famous address of the honorable Edward Everette on George Washington, April 12, 1859. Nearly six hundred tickets were sold, it was recorded, including the galleries. A letter granting the request was signed by the pastor Rev. J. S. Walthall.

The Col Whitford papers say of Rev. Walthall at the time: “It need not be repeated at this time how much esteem and confidence he had of all the denominations within the circle of his acquaintances, and holding also the highest respect and affection of his own congregation - the Baptist”. Later Rev. Walthall was an associate editor of The Biblical Recorder.

Oct. 9, 1859, a Rev. Owen was called to the pastoral duties of the church. Dec. 18, 1859 he declined acceptance of the call.

At he same time, the Baptist State Convention of N. C. was invited to hold its next annual meeting with the New Bern Baptist Church.

As far as we can ascertain, only two ministers ever served the Baptist Church who, prior to their being called, had been of some other religious faith. The first of course, being Rev. William Hooper, who had been an Episcopal minister; and now, Rev. Abraham D. Cohen, a jew.

Rev. Cohen was called to the pastorate of the Baptist Church May 1, 1860, at a salary of \$1000.00 per year. He served until 1869. Up to this time in history, his pastorate was the longest served, and his salary the greatest.

Rev. Cohen came to New Bern from South Carolina, and he was hired for one year. This fact causes us to believe that perhaps because of his Jewish background, he was sort of chosen on a trial basis.

It is interesting that the minutes of July 7, 1860, have this

to say: "The regular time of our quarterly communion having expired, it is there upon moved that the 4th Sabbath in July being observed for the communion".

Sept. 3, 1860, the committee who had been appointed over a year ago to "wait on" Sisters Allen and Riggs, reported that the two ladies were no longer "squabbling", and had settled the differences between themselves.

Sept. 30, 1860, a special conference was called for the purpose of electing one deacon. 29 votes were cast, Bro. Slade receiving 20 of them. He was popular!

Oct. 29, 1860, delegates are appointed to the convention; and again, an invitation was extended by the church for the next annual meeting.

An interesting observation now is that at meetings the church has been taking an offering for education.

The delegates to the convention took with them the following sums:

| | |
|------------------|---------|
| Foreign Missions | \$11.70 |
| Home Missions | \$9.96 |
| Education | \$2.00 |
| State | \$6.25 |

At this time the church mourned the death of a valuable member and faithful deacon, Brother James Brinson.

Nov. 15, 1860, a letter of dismission was handed the church for Bro. A. D. Cohen, and Sister Cohen of the St. Helena Baptist Church of the state of S. C. They were duly received into the New Bern Baptist Church. Church letters were often late in arriving.

Col. John Whitford made the following statements concerning Rev. Cohen. "He is a Christian and a Baptist, indisputably from thorough and intelligent investigation and deep convictions; a case of resolving conscience, thus he did not stop to determine what effect would be on himself here, personally, but only as to whether he was right. His early training and education would have led him away in other directions and faith".

Rev. Cohen was married twice. We know nothing about his first marriage except that it produced a son, Walter, who preceded him in death. The second Mrs. Cohen was the youngest daughter of Elijah Clark, Julia Clark Henry.. She had been married to a Mr. Henry. She was a member of the Baptist Church for fifty years and died in Savannah, Georgia.

Rev. Cohen lived more than four score years. He is buried in Cedar Grove Cemetery.

Rev. Cohen's pastorate was to be perhaps the most difficult of any minister since he was to lead the church through the period of the Civil War.

Jan. 20, 1861 a special meeting was called and the pastor made known its purpose. Re: To consider the propriety of having special meetings for the colored persons of the community. A committee was appointed to investigate. A February meeting records that the investigation was continuing.

In the conference of March 4, 1861, announcement was made that the late Mrs. McCoy had left \$50.00 in her will to the New Bern Baptist Church.

The minutes from April to Sept., 1861, are completely illegible.

Sept. 15, 1861 Rev. Cohen presented a letter of resignation, stating his reasons. The church asked that he withdraw his resignation, promising to make up his salary. He withdrew same.

Once again a veil was drawn. We have nothing recorded of the church during the entire period of the Civil War. The minutes cease with June 1862 and begin again May 7, 1866.

Even today it is distressing when we read of the siege and the fall of New Bern, which began at 3:00 on the morning of August 14, 1862.

In the battle the Federal loss was 91 dead, and 466 wounded. The Confederates admitted a loss of 500 including the prisoners.

The population of New Bern was 5,500, and Raleigh, the state Capital had about 2,000 less.

During the Civil War, immediately after the occupation of the town by the Union Army, all churches were ordered seized, and the Baptist Church was served by several Chaplains. It is said that the church was also used for a treatment center for wounded soldiers.

Throughout the war era, the bell in the tower of the Baptist Church was the officially designated bell used to signal guard relief.

We do not know the whereabouts of Rev. Abraham Cohen during this war period, but we think that he fled the city, perhaps going to Georgia. We note in minutes soon after the war that an unmarried daughter of his was received into the

church by letter from a church in Georgia.

We know that many people had fled the city, including founder Elijah Clark who died in 1862 while in flight. This subject has been dealt with earlier in this history.

We now pass over 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, and begin with the minutes of May 7, 1866.

In this conference Mr. Zacchaeus Slade asked for more time to complete his "State of the Church 1862 - 1866". His request was granted.

At this same time a letter of thanks was drafted to the "Board of Domestic Missions", thanking them for aid in reclaiming and retaining the services of Rev. Cohen as pastor,

The pastor led in the reorganization of the Sunday School at this time. There were 61 scholars and 7 teachers.

A committee was appointed to try to obtain a list of the church members, and to determine their present status if possible.

All of these things seem to confirm our belief that the church was in a complete state of chaos in this post war period.

The report of Brother Slade dated June 4, 1866 confirms the happenings of the period. We quote: "At the time New Bern was occupied by the Federal forces on March 14, 1862, the pastor and the largest part of the members having left their home for various places of refuge in the interior of the state; there being but a minority of us left within the Federal lines. The church building was occupied by the Federal Army by order of the General in command.

I immediately opened my house for worship every Sabbath afternoon. I notified and invited the few members who remained in the town (about 22) to attend. Some of these, with factions from other denominations of Christians united with us in our appointed and usual worship. The exercises consisted of reading the scriptures, singing hymns, prayers and exhortations.

The meetings were generally well attended, and often, with apparent interest. There being no other meetings of the citizens in the place, the greater part of the time, these meetings were continued and sustained until the summer of 1865 when the church building was restored to us. Then Brother Kelly and myself conducted the meetings in the church until the Pastor Rev. A. D. Cohen and nearly all of the remaining members returned to us. Thus by an over ruling providence we are

permitted to unite again in peace and brotherly love as a family.

During the long separation there have been many painful recollections too numerous to mention here.

During the fall of 1864, the yellow fever prevailed for three months, and many citizens were victims. Some entire families were swept away.

Among our brothers and sisters who were thus carried off, and from other diseases from March 1862 to the summer of 1865 were the following:

Elijah Clark

W. D. O'Leary

Daniel O'Leary

Mrs. A. Commings

Sisters, Sanford, Copet, Margaret Gifford, Susan Allen and Nanoifa Slade.

Signed,

Z. Slade, Deacon"

End of report.

We believe today that had it not been for the efforts of this worthy deacon of forty years, Zachaeus Slade, there would be no First Baptist Church at 239 Middle St. in New Bern.

By this time the church building was eighteen years old and had suffered the ravages of war. It must have been in need of repair. A committee was appointed to same.

In the conference of July, 1866, the duty of repairs was given into hands of trustees who were told to have necessary work on belfry and bell done immediately. The report on updating the church roll was completed.

In April, 1867, there were several called conferences. It seems there was much difficulty in securing subscriptions for the pastor's salary.

Here's an interesting side glance just as it was recorded: "Miss Mary Ann Brinson was baptized by the pastor on Sabbath Day at 2½ o'clock May 12, 1867".

June 3, 1867, the church repairs committee reported that they had in hand sufficient funds to pay for church repairs to date.

Also, Rev. Cohen reported that he carried to the convention which met in Wilmington, Domestic Missions, \$10.00, Foreign Missions \$10.00, and State Missions \$10.00, also \$1.00 for minutes.

July 2, 1867, application was made through Bro. C. C. Clark by the ladies of "The Baptist Sewing Society" for permission to paint the church. Permission was granted.

Aug. 5, 1867 the church voted to erect a tablet in the church as a memorial to Elijah Clark, faithful deacon and co-founder of the church. This was done.

On this same date Bro. E. B. Wood applied for a license to preach the gospel, and his dismission to a church in Philadelphia. His request was not granted, and charges were made against him, namely:

1. Fraud
2. Falsehood
3. Intoxication
4. Attending a circus

Investigation was continued. It was at this time that the church decided to invite to our communion all persons who had been baptized by a Baptist minister, if their conduct did not prevent it.

As a side glance at this time, it seems worthy to note that in more recent times in the church history, there was never any difficulty in providing the support of the minister. In the old days, at least up to the beginning of the 20th Century, there was always a problem in securing subscriptions to pay the preacher.

During the latter years of Rev. Cohen's pastorate, according to the Whitford papers, he solicited the aid of Col. Whitford in securing a communion service for the church. In looking about for it, Whitford says he stumbled upon a house in New York furnishing such goods, and bought a duplicate of that in a Baptist Church on Madison Ave., the church in New Bern being a plan of it. It was a handsome silver set. From an old yellowed sheet found among old papers in the church, the anonymous writer says he can attest to the fact that Col. Whitford paid for the set himself; that it was used for a time, and mysteriously disappeared, and to this day has never been found.

May 16, 1868, we note that the soul of Bro. James C. Stevenson, an honored member of 49 years, and a deacon for many of those years, had been called to his heavenly reward. Resolutions of respect were drawn to his memory.

Again, the State Convention was invited to meet in New Bern in 1869.

Again, in Dec. 1868, plans were being formulated to try to raise the pastor's salary for 1869.

In the same conference, it was voted that the pews be rented, and that no pew be rented for less than \$10.00 (annually),

and that if any person could not pay the amount, that the deacons work out a price with them.

In Jan. 1869, it was announced that some pews had been rented for \$4.40, and they hoped to rent more.

On March 14, 1869, at the request of the Kinston church that Rev. Cohen be allowed to preach for them once a month it was voted to grant him leave of absence for that purpose.

Abraham D. Cohen resigned his pastorate Aug. 1, 1869. It was accepted Aug. 8.

The Oct. 6, 1869, minutes mention the plans for the meeting of the State Convention, which we have to assume convened in Nov. The next mention is made of it Dec. 6, 1869, listing the amount paid for the church at the meeting of the convention here.

Nov. 20, 1869, Rev. Elden John Mitchel was issued a call to the pastorate of the New Bern Baptist Church. He declined the call.

Feb. 1, 1870 Rev. Levi Thorne was called to the pastorate of the church for the year ending Jan. 1, 1871, at a salary of \$700.00. He was to serve two terms, 1870-72, again in 1875. We shall deal only with his first pastorate at this time.

As late as Nov. 5, 1870, Rev. Cohen had not left the city. The pastor and Rev. A. D. Cohen were appointed delegates to the State Convention, so we know he was still in New Bern.

At the conference dated Dec. 7, 1870, Brother Clark (Elijah's son) chairman of the committee to raise money to buy coal and repair the gate, reported progress.

Feb. 4, 1871, the committee to get subscriptions for the pastors salary announced that \$700.00 had been raised.

It was also ordered that the committee on Premises be given full authority to employ and discharge the sexton.

In April 1871, the church voted to change the time for the celebration of the Lord's Supper from Sabbath morning to Sabbath evening.

The conference of May 6, 1881 was the first time we have seen recorded any reference to an organ. It says "\$20.00 was allowed to repair the organ".

In June, 1871, new rules governing the collection of funds from members were put in motion. Every member was required to give of his or her substance. The roll was divided among the deacons. He was to call upon each member of his "class" and if they did not pay their dues their names were to be read

publicly at the next assembly.

The treasurer was to provide two boxes to be placed in convenient locations in the church in order that members could stop by and leave their dues. (How times have changed!) This method of giving was not to interfere in any manner with regular Sabbath day offerings.

We note with interest that Miss Fannie Holland was received into the church by baptism. Miss Fannie was the aunt who reared our recently deceased member George Holland. Her home stood on George Street where the Palace grounds are.

It was not unusual for a member to be excluded from the church if he or she had been guilty of neglecting his or her obligations. June 3, 1871, Sister Jones was excluded for such a reason.

Up to this point in time, there were no unusual accomplishments to distinguish the pastorate of Rev. Levi Thorne.

On the last mentioned date he was granted a two month leave of absence because of his poor state of health. Five ladies were appointed to raise funds to defray his expenses.

Aug. 5, 1871, the "Ladies Sewing Society" donated \$135.00 to be used for church repairs. They were sent a letter of thanks. Thanks Be To God For The Ladies!

Dec. 9, 1871, the rules of the church relating to members attending dances, circuses or theatrical performances were rescinded, recommending that the church be guided by the teaching of the gospel on such matters.

The report on the pastor's salary on Jan. 6, 1872, is as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------|
| Subscriptions and Donations | \$735.00 |
| Collected on same | \$645.00 |
| Still due | \$90.50 |
| Paid to Pastor | \$669.43 |
| Treas. in advance | \$23.93 |

At this time the pastor was honored with gratification for a magnificent sermon he delivered the previous Sunday, reproving members for indulgence in worldly amusements, especially dancing.

In this modern age in which we live, we note a continual plea for funds for many kinds of religious and "so called" religious purposes, particularly through the news media and television.

It is nothing new! In the old records there was constant mention of devising effective means of raising funds for multi-purposes.

May 4, 1872, Rev. Thorne announced that if by Aug. 1 some improvement had not been made in paying his salary, he would surrender his pastoral charge. The church, regarding Rev. Thorne most highly as a dear friend, fine pastor and an eloquent preacher, devised means of raising \$1000.00.

July 6, 1872, the church voted to sell the carpets not now in use, and to give the money to the Sewing Society, to be used for "Cushioning" the church.

July 11, 1872, the church voted to organize a choir. A committee of five was appointed.

Oct. 17, 1872, the church ordered that the trustees be authorized to sell the interest of the church under the will of a deceased member, J. W. Johnson to the house and lot on Middle St., second door from the church.

Nov. 30, 1872, Rev. Thorne announced that he could not serve the church longer mainly because of ill health. So ended his first pastorate!

On Feb. 10, 1873, a pastoral call was extended to Elder S. W. Westcott, at a salary of \$500.00 for the remainder of the year.

Again in Aug. 1873, the church voted that the "Articles of Faith", and the "Rules of Government" be read to the church every third month.

On Dec. 6, 1873, a motion was made and carried that all female members, 60 years or older, be permanently excused from attending church meetings (conferences).

On this date, Sister Huntington was charged with a disorderly walk, in that she had connected herself with the Episcopal denomination while she was a member of the New Bern Baptist Church.

We wonder at this period how the church managed to do any soul winning! So much time and effort was spent preferring charges against members for poor conduct.

In March, 1874, a committee of five, three women and two men, were appointed to have the church grounds "laid off and ornamented".

Little is being said about the Pastor Rev. Westcott. He is not mentioned in the Whitford Papers as far as we can ascertain. He, being a staunch Baptist, we wonder why he was

called an Elder.

Names were beginning to show up in the records which sound more familiar to us: like Latham, Whitehurst, Ipock, Cook, Spencer. These facts and others indicate to us the swift passage of time.

April 6, 1874, a committee was appointed to "see to" the painting of the church building and to put the grounds and side walk in order.

I think it is important that we note that delinquent members of the church were dealt with because of being unfaithful in the performance of their Christian duties, especially church attendance. We certainly are lax today in making contacts with absent members. We have local members who are physically able to attend services of worship but rarely darken the door of the church building. We are guilty of neglect. So are they!

In the conference of Sept. 7, 1874 Bro. C. C. Clark made some remarks concerning the fact that some of the Sunday School scholars had left the Baptist Church and gone to the Methodist Sunday School because they had better teachers. He offered his resignation as Superintendent.

It was further noted that on motion, the sexton was instructed to ring the bell for Sabbath services from "10¼ to 10½!"

Oct. 5, 1874, Brother G. W. Westcott presented his letter of resignation as pastor of the New Bern Baptist Church, at the November conference; it was accepted, and the church requested that a committee contact Bro. Levi Thorne to ascertain whether or not he would be interested in a second term as pastor.

A pastoral call was made to Rev. Levi Thorne, December 27, 1874, at a specially called meeting for the purpose.

Rev. Thorne accepted the charge, and preached his first sermon the following Sabbath morning. He preached from the second Epistle of Peter, third chapter, first and second verses.

Again, the question of the rental of pews emerges. Bro. C. C. Clark moved that the rule of renting pews be rescinded. He lost! Pews were still rented.

May 3, 1875, the church with the aid of the pastor, had collected the sum of \$20.00 for Foreign Missions, the amount to be sent to the meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention Meeting in Charleston, S. C.

Again, the church was trying to devise means of raising the

pastor's salary. A motion was made in the June conference to call Rev. Thorne to the pastorate for the next year. He agreed to remain only if he be paid a salary of \$1,000.00. The church regretted that the amount could not be raised.

In the next conference, letters of dismissal were granted to Rev. and Sister Thorne. The short pastorate seemed to have accomplished little. This leads us to believe that second pastorates may not always be to the best interest of those concerned.

The church conference dated August 2, 1875, has this to say, "Brother Slade made some remarks, and he stated that as far as he was aware, the church was out of debt, and he also stated that he had heard much complaint of the rumblings of the sexton in performing his duties."

As far as records show, this was the first time the New Bern Baptist Church has been free of debt since the first meeting house was completed in 1811.

August 3, 1875, Mite Boxes were mentioned for the first time. The money was to be collected from them and given to the treasurer. A footnote to the minutes of September 19, 1875, written in pencil, by a hand other than the clerk, lists:

Membership Oct. 1 - 74

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Males | 27 |
| Females | 87 |
| Total | 114 |

October 4, 1875, it was announced that a pastoral call had been extended to Rev. Babb, who had been highly recommended to the church. He replied by letter that he would consider the call if support could be offered to him and his family.

November 1, 1875, Brother Slade announced that \$551.00 had been subscribed for pew rentals, and this sum would go toward the pastor's salary.

February 7, 1876, no word had been received from Rev. Babb, who had accepted the call to pastor the church, but had not yet made his appearance.

In the meanwhile, Rev. J W. Taylor had visited the church and preached for one week. He was persuaded to remain and preach during the month of March, and the church would pay board for him and his wife.

Rev. Taylor became the pastor and he and his wife, Elizabeth, were admitted to the church by letter from the church at Greenville, N.C. The date was April 9, 1876.

During the early years of the church, pastors were secured in much less time than they are today. Oft times in one or two months a replacement was found. The screening process could not have been as thorough as it is in our time. Travel must have been a factor. We have not found any recording of a committee having traveled anywhere to hear a prospective minister. Recommendations usually came from another minister by correspondence.

Wednesday April 5, 1876, the beloved and venerable Bro. Zacchaeus Slade was called from his earthly home to his home eternal in the Heavens. His funeral was preached on Thursday by the Pastor, J.W. Taylor.

As I attempt to put together these pages of Baptist History, I feel a great sense of loss. Mr. Slade had been such an integral part of our attempt to bring alive to you the struggles and the accomplishments of those dear people of long ago. There has hardly been a page on which Zacchaeus Slade's name did not appear. Resolutions of respect were drawn to his memory. It was later noted that Bro. Slade had expressed a wish that he did not want any "eulogistic resolutions" passed. Therefore, the Resolutions Committee were discharged without completing their task.

The church membership was increasing at a rapid rate. Sunday, May 28, 1876, eighteen persons were baptised in the river Neuse and became members of the New Bern Baptist Church. Five persons were baptised June 2, and eight on June 4 at "8½" o'clock. The reception of new members continued at every meeting! Pastor Taylor extended the right hand of fellowship to 38 members at one service.

On June 12, 1876, Rev. Levi Thorne and his wife asked for letters of dismission in order that they might join the First Baptist Church of Milford Del.

Announcement was made on the same date that on the next Sabbath after morning worship, there would be an election of deacons.

September 4, 1876, again we find a member, a female, was excluded from the church.

October 1, 1876, the following Sunday School report is worthy of note:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Superintendent | C. C. Clark |
| Number of Teachers | 19 |
| Number of Pupils | 197 |
| Volumes in Library | 360 |

Note that "scholars" have now become students.

The treasurer's report of October 2, 1876, reads:
"No funds on hand and no debts. Church is completely out of debt."

February 8, 1877, the pastor announced that his salary would have to be raised to \$660.00. That he could not live on his present salary.

April 2, 1877, a communication was read from Bro. J. B. Richardson, Secretary of the Mission Board asking that the church collect 20¢ per member during the present year for State and Foreign Missions.

The Pastor, Rev. J. W. Taylor, resigned his pastorate, effective June 1 of 1877. It was accepted.

Rev. J. W. Taylor's farewell sermon delivered May 27, 1877, ended with these verses published two days later on the front page of The Daily Nut Shell, New Bern's daily newspaper:

NO NIGHT IN HEAVEN

No night in Heaven! No darkness there!
But glorious light for mind and soul,
And waves of love for hungry hearts
Forever through it grandly roll.

No night in Heaven, of sin or death,
No mental night, or tears of pain,
To soil the soul and wound the heart,
To cramp the mind by error's chain.

No night in Heaven but endless rest,
The conscious rest that is not rust,
When mind with knowledge overflows
And knowing all takes nought on trust.

Four sacred books are open there
Whose pages here are dark to man,
Four books which by dim human light
He ever vainly strives to scare

But who by searching finds out God,
Or His high Purpose can reveal?
Who read His book of Providence,
Til He Himself shall break the seal?

But ah there is no night in Heaven!
Creation's book lies open wide,
And every longing soul may read
Redemption's volume by its side.

No night in Heaven, but only love,
For 'neath its pure effulgent light
All hope shall in fruition end.
And faith be lost fore'er in sight.

M. B. C.

In April 1877, after Rev. Taylor's resignation the church corresponded with Rev. E. C. Dargon of Greenville, S. C. Theological Seminary, and invited him to pay the church a visit preliminary to a call if mutually satisfactory.

In the conference of May 7, 1877, after three serious charges, an investigation, and a trial, Bro. Whitehurst was excluded from the church.

At the same meeting, on a motion from Bro. Latham, it was ordered that the church bell be rung at the same time as the Episcopal bell on Sabbath Mornings.

At this same time a letter of high recommendation was sent to Bro. J. W. Taylor, the departing pastor. He had served the church well and was quite popular among the membership.

At this time, May 29, 1877, is the first mention of a parsonage that we have found since we began the research.

A motion was made and carried, that M. J. Bailey, President & Trustee of the church for the parsonage, execute a mortgage thereon to secure any loan which might be effected with Dr. F. Duffy, or other person to pay the debt due Citizens Building and Loan Association of Newbern - this is as it was stated in the minutes. We will pursue the question of the parsonage later.

On June 14, 1877, the deacons were instructed to "see" how much could be raised for the support of a pastor, and to offer that amount to Bro. E. C. Dargan of S. C. \$600.00 was raised and Rev. Dargan was called, but he declined.

August 5th, 1877, Rev. Robert W. Lide of Cheraw, S. C., was extended a call at the \$600.00 salary figure, which he accepted.

October 1, 1877, the Association was invited and "urged" to hold the next meeting with the New Bern Baptist Church.

November 5, 1877, at the conference, Rev. Lide asked for and received permission to appoint the delegates to the State Convention meeting in Durham, November 7. It would seem to us that the delegates were not allowed much time for preparation.

November 25, Rev. Lide and his wife, Dorah, were admitted to membership by letter from the church at Cheraw, S. C. It

is strange that no children are ever mentioned in the church letters of the pastors.

In December of 1877, the pastor announced that he was very anxious to introduce into the church the small "Mite Boxes" for mission purposes and to form a society to be known as the "Women's Mission Society". The president of said Society was to be in charge of the Mite Boxes to see that the money from them was sent to Foreign Missions.

Pastor Lide also recommended that the hymn book known as the "Psalmist" be replaced with the "Baptist Hymn Book". He also recommended a committee on church music. Such a committee was appointed.

A committee on "Invitation", "Finance", "Report on Offenses", "Missions", and "Church Grounds" were also appointed.

Sounds as though the church was going modern!

The pastor and the deacons were authorized to change the "stand" on the pulpit to one more suitable and convenient to the pastor.

Also, at the same conference, a sizeable bill was presented to the church for payment. It was to the Newbern Gas-Light Co. for \$7.45. It was authorized to be paid. A letter was read from W. L. Lewis, agent for the Smyrna Baptist Church, asking for the "stand" which had recently been discarded, for a church they were now building. The deacons granted the request.

May we say here, that after many years of use, the "stand" (pulpit) has finally come home! It proudly sits in our Archives Room today.

At this period, and earlier, we find it not uncommon that a church frequently asks for financial help from another church. For instance, in this same year, the church at Washington N. C., requested aid in building a fence around their property.

March 4, 1878, Rev. John Armstrong, a former pastor, came from Raleigh to visit the church. This same month Bro. J. E. Ray, Secretary of Missions of the State Convention wrote, suggesting that Missions Offering be made quarterly to Foreign State and Home Missions. The plan was adopted.

April 1, 1878, was a time of change! The church for the first time uses the term "Pledge" instead of "Subscription".

Sunday Morning April 14, 1878, at a specially called meeting

after Worship, the clerk read a letter from Rev. Lide tendering his resignation as pastor because of the bad condition of his health.

May 6, 1878, Brother D. G. Lyon was invited to fill the pulpit while the church was without a pastor. The question of his board was taken into consideration. Rev. Lyon came from the Seminary of Louisville, Ky.

The problem with the organ again surfaced. The Organ Committee was instructed to give Mr. R. Beny a description of the organ.

July 2, 1878, the Organ Committee announced that the church was unable to purchase a new one at this time. The committee was discharged.

The former Pastor, Rev. Lide wrote to the Chairman of the Deacons, stating that he would consider returning to the pastorate if the church would agree on only one service on the Sabbath Day, and if the church would build him a stable at the parsonage. The church voted not to accept his offer because of his inability to preach an evening sermon.

September 15, 1878, the Rev. Fred W. Eason of Fayetteville, N.C., was called to the pastorate of the New Bern Baptist Church at \$600.00 salary annually, and all above that figure which could be raised. Also, the parsonage. Bro. Eason agreed to accept the charge only if all the members were at peace and in loving harmony with one with the other. Also if there was not one or more persons who tried to rule the other, with a rod of iron. He further said that the brethren must saturate his labor with their love and constant prayers. He also asked the church to be responsible for moving him to New Bern at a cost of \$140.00. Only \$9.00 could be raised.

The Association met with the church in October. The delegates arrived by train; were met at the station and taken to the homes where they were to be entertained during their stay in the city.

The Fayetteville Church protested Rev. Eason's leaving and asked the New Bern Church to relinquish their claim upon him. Bro. Eason chose to come to New Bern, which he did in November. He and Mrs. Eason were received into the church by letter December 3, 1878.

In a conference December 22, 1878, it was moved that a formal request be made by the deacons to the rector and vestry of the Episcopal Church asking them to change the

ringing of their bell to conform with others as the ringing of their bell after ours greatly disturbed our services. The Episcopal Church made no reply to the request.

January 5, 1879, the church voted to have pulpit lights increased from four to six. The gas bill for the month was \$4.45, and wood \$1.70. It was further voted that the Sexton should build the fire in the church Saturday night instead of Sunday morning as had been done heretofore.

Again, in April 1879, Prayer Meeting was changed from meeting in private homes back to the church house.

In July 1879, Rev. Eason asked to be relieved of preaching night service in July and August. The request was granted.

October 5, 1879, M. J. Bailey resigned as organist. Miss Fannie Holland was elected to replace him.

October 19, 1879, the church adopted the envelope system for raising the pastor's salary. It was a time of change!

In November the church sent a donation of \$15.00 to Oxford Masonic Orphanage. That seemed a bit unusual. Up to this time there is no mention of assistance to a Fraternal Institution.

The pastor was authorized, January 7, 1880, to make such changes in the pulpit as he thought wise.

September 12, 1880, for the first time the minutes record that the pastor wanted to procure the services of Bro. Carter to assist in a "Protracted Meeting" in October.

The Baptist State Convention met in Goldsboro, Wednesday, Nov. 17, 1880. Six delegates were elected to attend.

During the early days of 1881, the pastor wrote a sketch history of the church which was ordered to be placed with the minutes. We have been unable to find the sketch as we have researched the old records. We shall continue the search.

March 6, 1882, sufficient money was raised and the pastor purchased a Pulpit Bible.

We note with interest that the name "Cohen" continued to be among the church roll. We have to assume that persons had family connections with Rev. Abraham Cohn, the Jewish man who served as pastor 1860 to 1869.

The Rules of Government were rescinded by a two thirds vote.

During this period, it is amazing how many people were coming into the church by baptism. We noted as many as thirty in a period of one month. Some names are beginning to sound familiar, such as D. G. Smaw, Thomas Mitchel and others.

It has happened! The Baptist Church of New Bern, N.C. was now, April 23, 1882, referred to as "The First Baptist Church" of New Bern.. We find in the minutes of this date, a reprint of the history which Rev. Eason wrote and had published in the "Religious Herald". It is pretty much as the account we have set down in these pages. A portion of the last paragraph we quote:

"We thank God and take courage. Thank Him for what has been done in the departed years, and for the scores born into the Kingdom, and gone to Glory, from the Fold-take courage as we remember how this branch was planted, and how it stands in living greenness, being watered by His Almighty hand. The Lord has helped us. In His mighty name we float our banner and gird up our loins and press on".

Fred M. Eason

No person living in our church today remembers that we ever owned a parsonage before the one on Johnson and Craven (Graves) Street, but we did! I quote from the minutes of June 5, 1882 "Resolved that the church approve of the proposed sale of the parsonage to Judge A. S. Seymour for \$1200.00; \$700.00 to be paid on July 10, 1882, and \$500.00 on November 1, 1882 with interest thereon from June 1, 1882,". Also "Resolved that the trustees and the trustees of the parsonage, are requested and instructed to execute a contract on the terms above named, and also a deed in fee of, covenants of warrant when all the purchase money is paid and the purchaser has the possession from June 1, 1882".

On motion the resolutions were unanimously adopted.

On September 25, 1882, Bro. Brinson, the treasurer announced that Judge Seymour had paid the \$700.00 due on sale of parsonage; out of that amount he had paid Dr. F. Duffy "about" \$200.00 which was due on the amount owed him. The balance of \$500.00 he owes, when it is due November 1, 1882.

We are trying to research this property in county records. If we are successful we will attach same to pages left for that purpose.

We are so pleased to have found in Craven County Register of Deeds Office, in Deed Book #131, pages 401-02-03 dated August 22, 1884, the information we needed. The parsonage and lot were situated (located) on the north side of Change Street between East Front and Craven Streets. (Across street

from present residence of Mrs. D. L. Ward).

The trustees who signed the deed were:

A. T. Jerkins
W. F. Rountree
Thomas Gates
J. B. Holland
John P. Hall

The witness was Charles C. Clark. The Probate Judge was E. W. Carpenter.

An abstract is attached, along with several others, following the pages of this history.

At this time the deacons were instructed to raise \$10.00 extra per month to pay rent on the pastor's house since we had no parsonage.

The financial reports of this period indicate a considerable increase in financial funds, as well as an increase in the membership, which has almost doubled during the pastorate of Rev. Fred W. Eason.

The Monthly Church Conferences, on motion, were changed to meet quarterly.

On the same day came a written request from Morehead City Baptist Church, requesting aid in the building of a House of Worship. The matter was delegated to a committee.

On September 25, 1882, it was announced by the deacons that \$25.00 had been raised to pay rent on the preacher's house.

Brother Baker informed the church on this date that while away in the north he had raised a sum of money, and asked to be allowed to use the same to repair the organ. The request was granted.

The financial matter between the church and Judge A. S. Seymour, who had purchased the parsonage, was disposed of satisfactorily at this time.

On the same date resolutions of love, admiration, respect, and gratitude were duly drawn to Rev. Eason on the occasion of his having completed his third year as pastor. He was lauded as a "high-toned" honorable gentleman who was responsible for having doubled the membership during his term as pastor.

Inasmuch as the church now had no parsonage, his salary was increased to \$800.00, and he was also granted a month's vacation.

In the conference of January 7, 1883, the question of loaning out the money received from sale of the parsonage was postponed until the next meeting.

Bro. Wm. Hancock stated that he had violated the law of the church; that he had fallen into sin and asked for prayer and forgiveness from the church.

The following side glances from minutes of January 25, 1883 are interesting:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Parsonage Rent from Dec. 81 to Nov. 82 | \$40.00 |
| Church Envelopes for Year | 2.50 |
| Gas Co. for gas Sept. 82 to Jan. 83 | 22.60 |
| Willis Smelling for pumping Organ | 3.00 |
| D. G. Smaw - Furnace Repair | 2.65 |

Compare with today's costs!!

March 31, 1883, parsonage funds on hand were \$503.90.

On this date, a letter was received from the Board of Education requesting aid. The letter was signed by C. E. Taylor.

Rev. Fred W. Eason resigned his pastorate Sunday June 3, 1882. It was accepted with deep regret. Resolutions were suitably drawn.

July 5, 1883 the Parsonage Committee announced that they had loaned \$500.00 to the New Bern and Pamlico Steam Transportation Co. with Bros. Thomas Gates and George Dail as security. This committee was dismissed.

July 12, 1883, a special meeting was called to consider four ministers who had been recommended to the church. One person was the Rev. C. A. Jenkins who was called August 23, 1883, at a salary of \$800.00.

A motion was made and carried that the furniture belonging to the church be sold, and the money be put into the Parsonage Fund. The treasurer insisted that this be done immediately.

Rev. Jenkins arrived to take charge of the pastoral duties October 1, 1883.

On October 4, 1883, the church voted to repair the church fence and gate.

The Baptist State Convention met in Edenton November 14-15-16, 1883. Rev. Jenkins was appointed to represent the church.

Finally, we know that the church organ was a pump type because W. R. Smelling was paid \$3.00 for pumping the organ.

At this time, March 13, 1884, the church voted to join the New Association.

Thursday evening, April 10, 1884, a special conference was called to take steps to procure a parsonage. A committee was appointed to "look into" the matter and to report later their findings.

May 1, 1884, a special meeting was called relative to the subject of procuring a parsonage. The best solution at the time was to purchase a lot on the corner of Johnson and Graves (Craven), St. to build a house for about \$1500.00. A Building Committee was appointed with power to act.

We shall pursue this subject later in the recording of this history.

We stand amazed at the spiritual growth of the church. In May and June, 1884, 44 persons joined the church by baptism.

Thursday, July 3, 1884, the trustees were instructed to execute a mortgage of \$500.00 with Dr. Frank Duffy to purchase the lot on Johnson and Graves (Craven) Street.

October 3, 1884, a committee to revise the Church Government was continued.

April 6, 1885, the Rules of Government were revised. It is a lengthy document. We shall mention a few articles, and we quote:

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| CHURCH CONFERENCE | “Art, 3 - No one - not a member of the church may attend a Church Conference except by unanimous consent. |
| | Art. 2 - No one may be elected as Deacon until he has been proved. |
| DEACONS | |
| | Art.4 - Deacons shall receive and disburse all funds. |
| STANDING RESOLUTIONS | Art. 4 - A Social Prayer Meeting shall be held every Thursday evening. |

At this time the Building Committee was authorized to borrow \$500.00 for two years at 8%, and to pledge the church property for the account.

June 30, 1885, the Sunday School Superintendant gave the following report:

“134 Scholars
24 Officers and Teachers
85 Average Attendance of Scholars
Signed,
B. M. Gates”

October 15, 1885, on motion, Carrie Rhem was elected to teach in the Sunday School. She was the very dear, outspoken “Miss Carrie Cole” who taught the beginners for more than sixty years.

On the same day the treasurer was authorized to buy 50 copies of “singing books” for the Sunday School, the amount not to exceed \$12.00.

There was also raised the question as to whether or not the International Lessons should be used for the Sunday School the next quarter. The decision was left to the discretion of the officers and teachers.

During this period in history, we note that more emphasis was being placed upon the operation and success of the Sunday School.

We also note the fact that the church clerk continued to refer to the church as the "New Bern Baptist Church" even though the local news media designated it as "The First Baptist" during Rev. Eason's pastorate.

January 11, 1886, a communication was read from Smith and Credle relating that Wm. Randolph had contracted with them for building material, for the parsonage.

At this time the preachers salary was increased to \$700.00 and "all over that" could be collected in the year 1886.

Mr. Smelling continued to pump the organ for \$3.00 per month.

Rev. C. A. Jenkins tendered his resignation January 1 as pastor to become effective July 1, 1886.

During this period January 1 to July 1, contact was made with Rev. Theodore Whitefield relative to his becoming the next pastor of the church. He consented to assume the responsibility July 1. The church immediately offered him a vacation until September 1886. Seems most unusual for one to be given a vacation even before he begins his work.

Brother Jenkins was accorded the normal courtesies extended to a departing pastor .

Now to the parsonage! A wonderful Jewish gentleman taught me that one should never assume anything! That is what we are doing when we say that Rev. Jenkins and his family occupied the parsonage in 1886. The only mention made of the parsonage is that a committee was appointed to raise money to pay off the indebtedness.

Bro. Whitefield declined to take the vacation, and began his pastorate July 1, 1886. Sunday, September 12, 1886 Bro. Whitefield and four members of his family were received into the church by letter from Goldsboro.

October 7, 1886, letters of dismission were granted to Brother and Sister Jenkins to a church in Oxford, N.C.

October 24, 1886, was the first time the Atlantic Association was mentioned. It convened in Kinston and four delegates were

sent to the sessions, along with the pastor.

We sense that changes are taking place. More women are being given places of responsibility in the church. The Pastor, Rev. Whitefield, appointed to the newly formed "Incidental Committee" Miss Fannie Holland, Mrs. Tillie Lewis and Mrs. Follette.

January 3, 1887, the pastor was appointed a committee of one to solicit funds to pay on the parsonage debt. He reported that he had collected some pledges as had Brothers Hancock and Holland. The old committee was discharged and a new one appointed, namely, Hancock, Holland and Whitty.

In 1887 Tobias Moore continued as sexton and W. E. Smelling was still pumping the organ for \$3.00 monthly.

On April 10, 1887, B. M. Gates, an honored and beloved member was called to his heavenly reward. Resolutions of respect were drawn in his memory. After reading so much about him in the old minutes, we feel pain and sorrow at this passing, just as we do today when members are called to their eternal rest.

June of 1887 finds the church still having difficulty raising the pastor's "back" salary. This situation seems to have been evident all through the years.

At the same time the young men of the church requested that they be allowed to hold prayer meeting in the church every Tuesday night. The request was granted.

The pastor requested July 4, 1887, that he be allowed the months of August and September as vacation, and that his salary continue during his absence.

At this time the title of the "Incidental Committee" was changed to "Finance Committee".

On July 10, 1887, the pastor was granted the two months vacation he had requested. On July 12, 1887, H. B. Duffy had requested that the church sell to him 24 feet off the back of the church lot, which would leave 105 feet. A committee was authorized to sell said footage if Duffy would pay \$300.00 cash instead of the \$200.00 he had offered.

October 5, 1887, Bro. A. M. Baker was granted permission to erect a tablet in loving memory of Bro. B. M. Gates.

The Atlantic Association met in Goldsboro. J. C. Whitty, H. B. Duffy, Chas. Gaskil and F. W. Hancock were sent as delegates.

October 3, 1887, Rev. Whitfield wrote a letter of resignation

as pastor of the church stating that he felt a sense of inefficiency in his labor in the church and that he also had received a call elsewhere. The resignation was accepted after the rule to give three months notice was rescinded.

You will have noticed that for quite some time we have not mentioned Col. John Whitfords "Walking Stick Papers". In this period he says little or nothing about the church. He mentions only one more pastor, the Rev. Hight C. Moore, who came to close out the 19th Century.

Often a minister has a feeling of inadequacy as he tries to lead his people. It is sad when such a condition exists. It is possible that it could change the direction of the minister's life, as well as retarding the growth and well being of the church which he is serving. This could have been true of Rev. Whitefield.

October 9th, 1887, a committee was appointed to "correspond" with some preachers relative to becoming pastor of the church. Seven honorable brethren were named.

The same day the deacons were authorized to appoint delegates to the State Convention.

In December 1887, Dr. Lide, a former pastor, was invited to come and preach, which he did. The church allowed \$20.00 to defray his expenses.

January 2, 1888, the committee which had been appointed to deal with the question of the sale of 24 feet off the back of the church lot to H. B. Duffy made the following report: "The trustees were instructed to make a deed to Bro. H. B. Duffy for \$300.00 for said lot if he would agree to pay half of the expenses involved in moving the line fence". The \$300.00 received was ordered to be applied to the parsonage debt.

At this time the church voted to have the roof of the parsonage painted.

The Evangelical Alliances were allowed the use of the church for the purpose of conducting a meeting.

A special conference was called January 11, 1888, for the purpose of extending a pastoral call to Rev. Henry W. Battle who had been highly recommended to the church. He was Chaplain-In-Chief of Sons of Confederate Veterans. He was to be granted the use of the parsonage, \$1000.00 salary, and "any more" that could be raised.

On February 2, the church received a letter of acceptance from Rev. Battle, written in Wadesboro, N. C.

It is so interesting to see many familiar names appearing in the church minutes.

March 4, 1888, twenty persons were received into the church. Among these were Fannie Tremwith (my grandmother's friend) Sam Brinson, Carrie Rhem, W. J. Lucas, W. L. Lewis, among others.

We note that in April 1888, Joe Smelling was now pumping the organ, and he received only \$1.50. He, no doubt, was William's son.

In July 2, 1888, the pastor referred to the church as "1st Baptist Church of New Bern" as he outlined a new program of work, namely:

1. A division of the city into sections or portions, each one distinctly defined. A committee or committees to be appointed to visit in each section on a regular basis.
2. "A Highway and Hedges Committee" to labor with boys and young men who frequent street corners.
3. A Sabbath School Committee shall be appointed to bring new "scholars" into the school.
4. A "Local Invitation Committee" to visit and invite strangers, to come to the church--and there are other changes.

At this time, the new pastor appeared to be involving the total church. More than a hundred persons were appointed to serve in various capacities, many being women.

Sunday, July 1, 1888, Brother F. W. Hancock, long time faithful deacon resigned his responsibility and Bro. J. B. Holland was elected to fill the vacancy.

At this point in time, it is interesting to note the increase in funds received, and funds disbursed. Change was upon us! The amounts are noted in the annual letter to the association.

January 7, 1888, the deacons were instructed to have a "Crossing Bridge" built across the ditch in front of the church; to have the ivy removed from the front of the church, particularly the door and woodwork, and to have the fence and gate repaired, and the church "cleaned up". The deacons were also instructed to procure a globe for the gas light on the front of the church.

In a conference of April 28, 1890, the deacons were requested to consider the matter of lighting the church with electricity.

As of this date, the amount due on the parsonage was \$137.00.

On June 30, 1890, announcement was made that the mortgage on the parsonage was paid in full: \$137.67.

During this period Mr. Sam Brinson was church clerk. His writing is difficult to read, but we shall be diligent in our search

for important data.

July 28, 1890, the deacons were instructed to appoint a committee to look into the matter of repairing the church.

Rev. Henry W. Battle tendered his resignation as pastor of the First Baptist Church of New Bern effective September 15, 1890. It was accepted.

September 29, 1890, the church clerk was instructed to revise the roll, and to delete the name of any member who had been absent from the church for one year or more.

Once again letters of invitation to visit the church were sent to several ministers who had been recommended as possible replacements for the pastor.

October 19, 1890, Brother W. T. Humdly was issued a call upon a motion made by Bro., Hancock, that he be called at a salary of \$800.00. He declined the call.

Brother Frank Dixon was extended a pastoral call at \$1,000.00 annually. He also declined. Our church was not overly popular at times.

November 24, a call was extended to Rev. Rufus Ford from S. C. He accepted the call for \$800.00 and the parsonage.

Sunday morning January 18, 1891, a special conference was called for the specific purpose of dealing with the subject of church repair. The deacons were instructed to ascertain the cost of new windows for the church.

We continue to note that only the names of male members are called at the church conferences. We do not know if that means inequality or respect for the ladies to excuse them from going out at night.

March 1, 1891 for the election of deacons, Bro. Whitty moved that an informal ballot be taken to elect five deacons. The five receiving highest votes were: Biddle, McDaniel, Smaw, Whitty and Brinson.

As the years pass, it is interesting that much more was said and done concerning the Sunday School. Often the superintendent was called upon for reports. They always denote progress.

March 30, 1891, the deacons were instructed to have the church roof repaired and painted. The committee on windows had yet to report.

Progress was everywhere! Bros. Whitehurst, Duffy, Robert Hancock, Smaw and Holland were appointed to take into consideration the advisability and cost of building a Baptistry, and

a Lecture room to be added to the rear of the church.

At this time there was a discussion and debate about the legality of the method of choosing deacons. The matter was resolved, and the number was left at five.

April 27, 1891, Brother Ford and his wife Harriet, and Sallie Ford were received by letter from The Missionary Baptist Church of Blendheim, S. C.

On the same day in conference, Brother Whitehurst reported that the cost of building the baptistry would be \$50.00 and the two rooms adjacent to it, size 7 x 10 feet would cost \$65.00 and \$70.00. The matter was continued.

In November 1891 we note the Tobias Moore, who had been the sexton of the church for years has been replaced by E. Oden, who received \$7.00 for the month of April.

The conference of June 21, 1891, records the following which is of interest in that an increase is shown:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Ministerial Education | \$30.00 |
| Home Missions | \$25.00 |
| Foreign Missions | \$25.00 |

On July 27, same year, the church gave to State Missions the sum of \$100.00. At the same conference the committee on church repair had received subscriptions of \$404.00 toward the project.

In July, \$20.00 was appropriated for the expenses of the Sunday School picnic. This was the first time any church sponsored social event has been mentioned.

December 6, 1891, a lengthy conference was held relative to discussing with members the fact that contributions to all gospel causes were not being made faithfully and on time. The Pastor, Rev. Ford stressed lack of support for local expense causes and Foreign Missions in particular.

February 29, 1892, minimal changes were made in the rules of the church, mainly dealing with financial regulations.

Collections continued to be made to defray the cost of repairs to the church.

August 29, 1892, the church voted to give support to any mission work undertaken by Bro. Clark's Sunday School Class.

Let's take a quick glance at the conduct of a faithful member. We quote from the minutes of August 29, 1892:

"Brother Robert Hancock stated that in consequence of sickness, he had taken a drink of French Brandy and desired to confess that he had done wrong and prayed for the forgiveness of the church".

The brother was excused!

The church took under consideration the propriety of distributing religious literature.

Much earlier, when we discussed the placing of the wood picket fence around the church property, we stated that it was replaced later by a wrought iron one in memory of Mrs. C. E. Patterson. September 1892, the time it was purchased and erected, Sister Patterson having left a bequest for that purpose in her will.

In October, 1892, the church again was host to the Atlantic Baptist Association. The letter from the church listed the membership as 231. Total funds received and disbursed \$2,499.70. Sunday School enrollment was 141.

October 16, 1892 the Pastor, Rev. Ford, announced that the purpose of the meeting was to interest the members of the church in raising funds to support a missionary who would live in New Bern and preach in surrounding areas to win souls to Jesus Christ. After an eloquent appeal, subscriptions from forty four persons were raised, amounting to about \$400.00. We have always been a mission minded church.

A committee was elected to select a missionary. This person was no doubt to become the first Associational Missionary.

December 4, 1892 a collection was taken toward the education expenses of a young Seminary student.

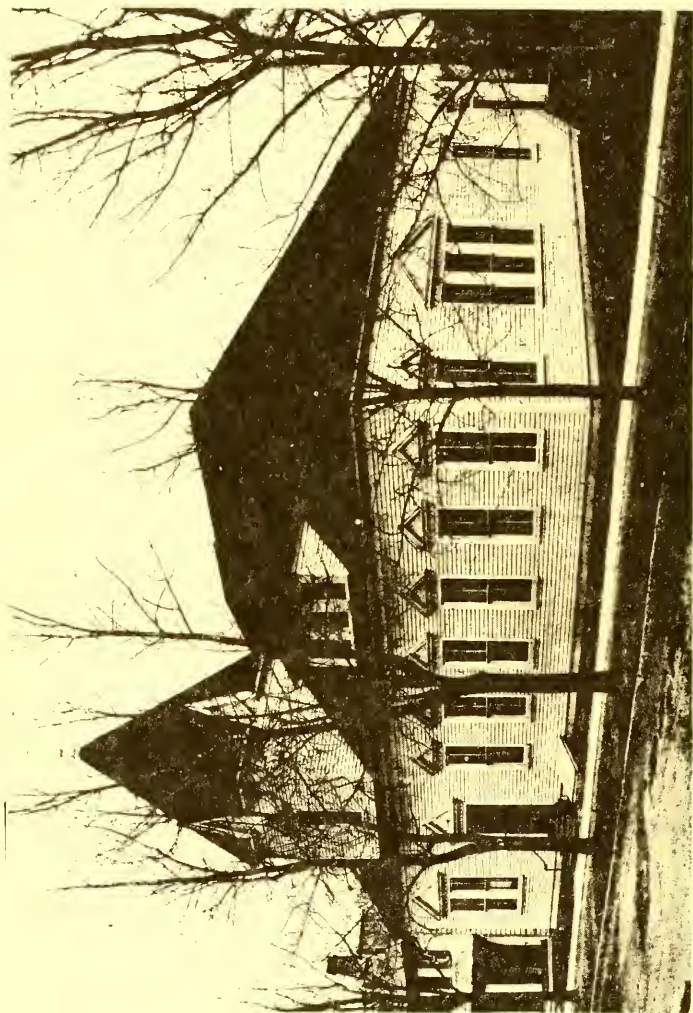
A Brother Rose was chosen as the new Missionary at a salary of \$400.00. The date was January 30, 1893.

The late Z. Slade had requested in his will that his daughter Susan J. Dudley on the occasion of her death bequeath the Slade-Dudley house on the corner of Broad and George Sts. and \$2,000.00 to the Baptist Church. This she did upon her recent death. The trustees accepted it, and ordered that the rental of same be turned over to the Board of Deacons.

March 29, 1893, the pastor's salary was increased by \$100.00.

On this date resolutions were made concerning the Slade house, and a \$2,000.00 legacy bequeathed by Z. Slade. The rental of the house and the investment profit of the \$2,000.00 would be used for missions, local and otherwise, and the fund would be known hereafter as the "Slade Mission Fund".

September 25, 1893, a committee of three was appointed to investigate the propriety of selling a small portion of the parsonage lot. At the next meeting a report was given stating that the sale of 12' could be made without harm to said lot.



TABERNACLE BAPTIST CHURCH

Organized by the First Baptist Church in April 1895
This building was destroyed by fire, Nov. 27, 1931. It was replaced by a fine modern
brick structure which stands today.

The sale was to be made to Mr. Ives for no less than \$25.00 (Abstract on back of page).

In July, 1894, it was duly noted that the Slade house at George & Broad St. was in need of repair. A committee to pursue the need was appointed. The rent for the Slade house had been reduced from \$16.66 $\frac{1}{3}$ to \$15.00 monthly.

Bro. H. B. Duffy, in the church conference of October 29, 1894 gave notice that in the November Conference, next, he would make a motion to invite the Baptist State Convention to meet with the church in 1895. At the conference stated, the invitation was extended.

Up to this point in time, the baptistry still had not been built, and the committee was working toward building a Sunday School room with the same building project.

December 31, 1894 Brother H. B. Duffy moved that the \$2,000.00 received from the Slade bequest be loaned by the deacons at 8% secured by mortgage on real estate. He further moved that the money should not be loaned to any member of the church. The motion lost. Baptists remain the same! This sounds like an instant replay of some of our modern day church conferences.

January 28, 1895, the people were still "squabbling" about the use of the \$2,000.00 Slade legacy.

Mr. T. J. Baxter presented to the church a beautiful clock, saying that it was a token of high appreciation of the marked courtesy and kindness which the church had extended to him.

The church voted to lend The Baptist Mission at the corner of Norwood and Pollock St. \$400.00 for erecting a building suitable for carrying on the work. The loan was to be secured by a mortgage on house and lot. The vote was 14 to 9 in the affirmative.

On March 3, 1895, Rev. Ford resigned his pastorate which had not been distinguished by any spectacular events. During this period the church has appeared to be concerned mainly with day to day happenings such as subscribing funds and such. The most outstanding effort was that of hiring a missionary for the area who was supported by the church.

The conference minutes of April 9, 1895, have much to say concerning the act of "Drawing Up" and reading to the church a long list of offenses, the commission, of which would call for immediate expulsion of the member so offending".

Many scriptures were quoted as the resolutions were defined.

Paul's letters were mentioned many times. It appeared that there was a question at this time as to whether or not the conduct of the church members is always exemplary. A right Christian spirit does not always prevail. What about today?

After the presentation of the lengthy list of rules and regulations, the following letter was read by the clerk. We quote:

"To the Pastor, brethren and sisters of the New Bern Baptist Church, We the undersigned members request letters of dismissal from the church to form a second Baptist Church, believing that the cause of Our Master can be better promoted in this community by the forming of a Baptist Church in the upper part of the city. Praying that the blessing of our God may rest with you and us.

Yours in Christ,

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| M. E. Whitehurst | H. B. Smith |
| D. E. Smaw | Thomas J. Mitchel |
| H. B. Duffy | Sallie S. Mitchel |
| J. A. Patterson | F. G. Mitchel |
| C. C. Jordan | M. J. Whitehurst |

Mrs. C. C. Jordan

The church clerk was instructed to grant letters as requested.

So, The Tabernacle Church was born! It has continued its worthy mission ever since.

May 5, 1895, the church voted to call Rev. Samuel J. Porter of Morehead City as the next pastor.

On June 24, 1895, Brother F. H. Whitty was granted a letter of dismission to join the Tabernacle Baptist Church.

July 29, 1895 the church voted to use a portion of the \$2,000.00 Slade legacy to pay the cost of building the Baptistry.

The new pastor's salary was set as \$800.00, plus the parsonage. At the same time the church was having difficulty raising the salary of the Missionary.

The first mention was made of Thomasville Orphanage September 30, 1895. A donation was sent to the institution from the church.

The Atlantic Association was again entertained by the church in October, 1895.

Sunday morning, November 17, 1895, the new Baptistry was used. Mrs. D. S. Hines was baptised.

On the same day Brother Rose resigned his responsibility as Church Missionary. He gave a very good report of his three years of service. He preached in 16 churches. He organized churches at Cove City, Truitt, Vanceboro, and Spring Garden. Church buildings were erected at Cove City and Spring Garden.

You will recall that earlier in the year the Baptist State Convention was invited to meet again in New Bern. There is no

further mention of it in the records.

Rev. Porter, while he was pastor in New Bern 1895 to 1898, wrote some of the religious books for which he was famous.

On April 13, 1896, on motion of Bro. Rountree, the rules of the church were so amended as to allow six (6) members to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

The same day, Bro. Porter, the pastor, was granted leave of absence to attend the Southern Baptist Convention.

Monday evening May 25, 1896, in conference, Bro. Rountree made a motion that "Hereafter the church shall be known as, and called The First Baptist Church". The motion prevailed.

It appears that since Rev. Eason's pastorate (1883) the title had been a sort of "on and off situation". One recording would designate it "New Bern Baptist Church"; the next, "First Baptist". It was now classified for all time to come.

At this time, the Building Committee was in action, instructed to report at the next conference.

June 29, 1896 Church Conference, resolutions were made concerning the locally organized Mission Field, the church was now able to sustain it's own mission work with the aid of funds available from profits from the Z. Slade bequest investment".

Bro. C. C. Clark, on behalf of the Building Committee announced that the final cost of the Baptistry and the adjacent two small rooms was \$825.00. The vouchers were now in the hand of the treasurer and deacons.

Already, some members who went to the Tabernacle Church were returning to First Baptist. Bro. H. B. Smith was received back into the church July 2, 1896.

August 3, 1896, Chas. C. Clark, Supt. of the Sunday School, wrote a most discouraging letter to the church stating that there was a definite downward tendency, the attendance was small, and poor, the teachers and the church did not appear interested in trying to improve the existing condition. A committee was appointed.

August 3, 1896, Rev. Porter made a motion that every church member who had been absent for at least six months should be called upon and dealt with.

After a time of trial and discussion concerning the mission field which the church had begun, it was decided the Rev. Ford be directed to correspond with the State Mission Board relative to the state taking over the responsibility of the mission work. The motion was carried.

November 8, 1896, the State Convention was again invited to meet with The First Baptist Church in New Bern for its annual session.

A new organ committee was approved 30 November, 1896, composed of the following persons: W. L. Lewis, C.C. Clark, Jr., Sam M. Brinson, R. G. Berry and Sister Fanny Holland.

Brother Clark stated that he had ordered a "Reflector", wished to give it to the church if necessary alterations could be made to accomodate it. A committee was appointed.

Monday, December 7, 1896 the organ committee resolved that; "Whenever a suitable organ can be purchased the deacons be instructed to turn over to the committee, the N. C. 6% coupon fund now in their custody or its fair market value". The motion was adopted.

In the final conference of 1896, the following resolution was adopted:

"When the new organ is purchased, that the old organ be turned over to the Aid Society who will inturn, sell it and apply amount received to payment of new organ.

The sexton was instructed hereafter to light one gas light in the vestibule, and one midway the aisle every Thursday evening.

Worthy of note is the fact that our own dear sainted "Miss" Mamie Hall (Mamie Berry) was baptized February 7, 1897. She remained a faithful and beloved servant until the day the Gates of Heaven opened and took her home. She prayed the prayer standing beside her husband's open grave.

February 22, 1897 new rules of conduct became effective, namely:

1. Any member found guilty of drunkenness would be excluded.
2. Any member being absent for two months, willfully, would be excluded.

Sunday morning April 25, 1897, the congregation of the First Baptist Church were invited to join with the Tabernacle Church upon the occasion of their dedication. Our church accepted, and was closed for that day.

Again, a member returned from Tabernacle July 4, 1897, one Sister Octavia Kellum. So like today! Mr. Hellen Huff, Sexton of Cedar Grove Cemetery when I came to New Bern in 1929, returned to First Baptist after having joined another faith.

Another change in church habit is noted. The pastor was never the moderator at church conferences, but rather a deacon filled the chair.

At some time (not recorded) Miss Fannie Holland evidently resigned as organist, because on October 11, 1897 the deacons were requested to "wait on" Miss Holland and ask her to resume her duties as organist. She declined. Mrs. Jordon volunteered to take charge of the organ and was elected.

Much is said about the unity in the church during this period. Three members were excluded at one time because they were "too busy" on Sunday to attend church. Members were asked at conferences whether or not they were in accord, at peace and harmony with their brethren.

A boy was "found to assist" Mrs. Jordon with the organ at her twice weekly practices.

Again, a member had returned from the Tabernacle Church. February 27, 1898, Rev. Samuel J. Porter resigned his pastorate effective April 15, 1898. It was accepted.

April 3, 1898, the church called to become the next pastor Rev. Hight C. Moore who was to lead the church in closing out the 19th Century and ushering in the 20th Century. The parsonage, a salary of \$720.00, and all above that which could be raised was offered him. Mr. Moore came from Monroe, North Carolina. He was urged to be on the field in 30 days. In that interm period no Sunday services were held.

Now is a good time to say that Col. John Whitford in the "Walking Stick Papers" has had some very interesting comments about the faithful servants of the Lord who ministered to the "ole Baptist" from the pulpit Sunday after Sunday, year end, year out! Hight C. Moore, the newly arrived pastor to First Baptist is the last one mentioned. We quote Col. Whitford:

"Here it is proposed to stop following the pastors for various reasons, and among them, it is sufficient to state, the present pastor of the above church, the Rev. Hight C. Moore is a classical and biblical scholar. He has demonstrated by his discourses and also in the column of "The Biblical Recorder", that he has the ability to perform, the patience and industry to investigate, united with the urbanity of a gentleman -- he is a learned preacher as the ones who came before him in the church at New Bern."

Col. Whitford says that the preachers in the Baptist Church were singularly pure in their personal lives, they were powerful preachers, and their aid to the Baptist Colleges, Baptist State Convention, and Baptist causes, throughout the south and the state is beyond computation.

We further quote him: "The original members of the Meeting House were the wedge, their ministers, the crew, and the "Biblical Recorder" the great lever that in its'

indispensable work lifted light out of darkness, gave strength to weakness, and power to a struggling Christian Church that otherwise it could not have possessed."

So now we leave Col. John Whitford to the remainder of the wonderful factual though sometime rambling events which he set to pen and paper, that we who come long after he had left the scene of action, might enjoy and learn from them.

Rev. Moore, and his wife Laura, were received by letter May 12, 1898 from the Baptist Church of Monroe.

Letters of dismission were granted May 19, 1898 to the former pastor Rev. Samuel J. Porter and his wife to unite with a church at Morganton, North Carolina.

The Atlantic Baptist Association met at Davis Shore in October. The pastor and eight other men were appointed as delegates.

On November 20, 1898, special resolutions of appreciation were drafted in behalf of the "Aid Society" for their wonderful work and support for the church. The task of "taking care of" and improving the parsonage were specifically mentioned, as was Miss Fannie Holland.

February 20, 1899 at Prayer Meeting a resolution was read stating that the rule requiring all monies to be turned over to the treasure, excludes "The Womans' Mission Society" who have the right to dispose of and remit all money raised by same, for missions, in a manner they may adopt for its own government.

In November, curtains were hung in the gallery to make a room for Miss Fannie Holland's infant Sunday School Class.

On February 11, 1900, Miss Fannie Holland asked permission to raise money for the purpose of enlarging the annex with either brick or frame, to accomodate the Sunday School Class. At the next meeting, the deacons objected to a frame annex and stated further that they did not want the church burdened with debt.

November 19, 1900, Rev. Moore offered the following resolution which was adopted. Re: "That the clerk of this church be authorized and instructed to apply, on behalf of the church, to the Congress of the United States of America for compensation for the occupancy of the church building by the Federal troops during the war 1862-1863-1864-1865." The proper affidavits were forewarded to the Congressman of the district, Hon. C. R. Thomas.

The document is pasted in the front of the book of minutes dated April 1896 to August 1915. The amount requested for the relief of the church was \$6,200.00. Mr. Thomas introduced the bill # H.R. 2805 in the House of Representatives December 4, 1905.

September 5, 1901, Brother Rountree stated that \$150.00 had been raised toward the purchase of a bell. We addressed the subject of the bell earlier in the history, believing from Col. Whitford's writings that the bell from the old church was still in our church today.

In every conference, the matter of the bell continued--there was much, much discussion. We shall record it when we learn the final result.

October 20, 1901, Brother M. B. Smith resigned as deacon. It was decided not to elect another deacon but instead, elect a "collector" whose duty would be to collect all monies, turn same over to the treasurer, and receive a signed receipt.

Again, the Slade legacy surfaced. January, 1902, it was voted that the rental of same be used for repairs of the property, and to add to the pastor's back salary.

On April 7, 1902 a committee to draft new "Rulers of the Church" reported, and the committee was discharged. The rules are not listed as they have been heretofore.

October 6, 1902, resolutions of thanks were drawn in behalf of the donors of the chandeliers. This is the first mention of chandeliers.

The final "Bell Report" was made by the committee December 7, 1902. The 1522 pound bell was purchased from McShane Bell Foundry of Baltimore Maryland. The final cost, plus installation minus allowance for the old bell, was \$337.18. The following is a financial report of funds raised:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Collected by Deacons | \$18.50 |
| Subscriptions | 206.18 |
| From "measuring" Party | 51.31 |
| From "Moon Light Sail" | 24.85 |
| Ladies Aid Society | 36.34 |
| Total Receipts for Bell | \$337.18 |

The chandeliers mentioned earlier were installed in the annex, which is lighted beautifully. They were donated by Mrs. Susan Churchille, J. C. Green, and Thomas A. Green in memory of their mother.

January 5, 1903 Resolutions of Appreciation were duly drawn for Brother J. B. Holland, which we quote from the

minutes: "Where as through the beneficence of Brother J. B. Holland during the past year, the church has been greatly enlarged, and improved at a cost of several hundred dollars, and more recently with the assistance of the ladies of the congregation, the auditorium has been handsomely carpeted. Therefore, be it resolved that a hearty and unanimous vote of thanks on the part of the church is hereby extended for these valuable improvements to our house of worship."

Building committees have been mentioned from time to time concerning roofs, windows, baptistry and needed repairs, but only once was the annex mentioned, the time that Miss Fannie Hollands' request to build a Sunday School room was denied.

January 1903, mention was first made of a Sunday School Convention. The Neuse and the Atlantic Associations were invited to join with First Baptist in such a convention.

The Pastor Rev. Hight C. Moore tendered his resignation February 12, 1903. It was accepted. The proper resolutions were adopted, expressing gratitude for his years of devoted service to the church.

Sunday morning, March 15, 1903 Brother A. D. Ward announced that Rev. W. H. Rich of Louisville, Kentucky and Rev. C. C. Cox of Richmond, Virginia were the two persons with whom the church had corresponded relative to the securing of a pastor.

The same day a committee was appointed to "tend to" some much needed repair and some painting, including the fence.

Three additional persons were added to the committee to secure a new pastor.

On the 24th of March 1903, Rev. W. H. Rich was extended a call to become pastor on the same terms extended to Rev. Moore five years prior -- \$720.00, and all above that amount that the church could raise, and the use of the parsonage.

The deacons were instructed in April of 1903 to proceed with the needed repairs.

The following excerpts from the annual report of the church to the Atlantic Association are signed by Rev. W. H. Rich.

"Received by letter 11, Baptism 10. Lost: by letter 5, expulsion 2, death 2. Present membership 72 males, 144 females for a total of 216 persons. Number in Sunday School 164. Womans Missionary Society has 30 members and the Ladies Aid Society, 50. Total funds were \$2,467.42.

During the conference of September 17, 1903 Brother Whitty

announced that it was necessary to purchase a new furnace which would cost \$107.09, FOB, place of sale, deacons were requested to consider and report at the next conference.

November 26, 1903 the pastor Rev. Rich submitted a lengthy letter he had prepared to the Tabernacle Church. It was signed by the clerk and read by him.

The letter implored the Tabernacle Church to reunite with First Baptist Church, citing many reasons among which were the following, and we quote:

"1. In union there is strength; in division, weakness. Total membership is too small for two churches - less than 300. Better pastors could be secured.

2. Mission work is badly needed in area. United, a city missionary could be employed.

3. It is a time of work by young people for young people. Both churches are weak in such an area.

4. We could work together for the redemption of our city, from saloons to redeem mens' souls from sin and hell."

A reply was received from Tabernacle December 1903 suggesting that a committee from each church be appointed to confer regarding the matter.

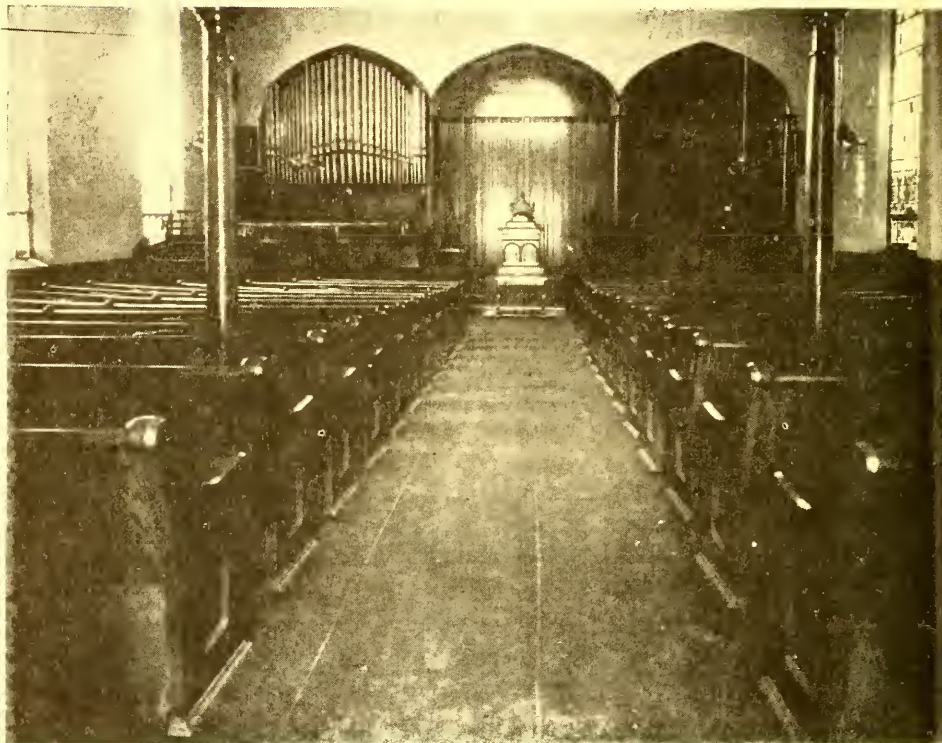
January 4, 1904 in conference the church voted to "take out" insurance policies, to cover \$1,500.00 on building and \$500.00 on organ.

At this time a financial report was listed for May 10, 1903, to January 3, 1904. One listing is "Organist \$12.40". This was the first mention of the organist having been paid. It amounted to the princely sum of about 50¢ weekly.

At this time letters were received from attorneys in Washington, D. C. Relative to the claim of the church during the Civil War. The offer of Attorneys George B. and W. M. King was accepted provided certain changes are made in the fee agreement, namely that the church would agree to a fee of 25% to attorneys contingent upon success, but the church was to be relieved of all expense save that incurred in taking testimony in this state.

A lot in Dunn Field was donated to the church for its use September 24, 1904. The deed was made to the trustees who were instructed to decide the desirability of securing an option on the lot next to it. Mr. Wm. Dunn was the donor of the lot, and the church at this time conferred with him concerning the lot adjoining same.

“A New Century”



INTERIOR OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 1942

Thursday evening July 14, 1904 Rev. W. H. Rich submitted his resignation which was unanimously accepted.

On September 1, 1904 a call was extended to Rev. W. A. Ayers who was to serve two terms as pastor.

We do not understand why, but on September 22, a standing vote call was extended to Rev. C. C. Cox of Richmond, Virginia. You will recall that he was considered at the same time Rev. Rich was called. The salary was set at \$1,000.00 plus all over which could be raised, plus the use of the parsonage. Mr. Cox came, but left almost immediately. He resigned effective May 1. His was the shortest pastorate in the history of the church. No mention was made of why it ended so abruptly.

On April 3, 1905, at the regular church conference, Miss Fannie Holland was thanked for additional work which she had done to the building and grounds.

At the same time the Deacons announced through Bro. Whitty that a loan had been negotiated as per instructions of the church; that bath room equipment for the parsoange had been paid in full.

Bro. Holland announed that the plans for early erection of a chapel at Dunn's field were underway.

Rev. W. A. Ayers of Elizabeth City was extended a pastoral call on April 30, 1905 at a salary of \$1,000.00 annally, and the parsonage. He accepted the call and arrived on the field immediately. A church program of later years listed his first pastorate as 1904-1907, but he did not come until 1905.

One of his first official duties was to appoint a committee composed of W. L. Lewis, J. C. Whitty, C. C. Clark, Jr., A. D. Ward and J. B. Holland to investigate and make a report concerning much needed repairs and improvements to the church. A cost estimate was to be presented.

A few members, one at a time, continued to return to First Baptist from Tabernacle Church.

It seems strange to us that the membership remained small.

Every conference recorded that persons were admitted to the fellowship either by letter or baptism.

October 3, 1905 the church letter which was sent to the Atlantic Association denoted improvement. The following figures are a part of said report: We quote:

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| Received - Baptism | 19 |
| Received - Letter | 34 |
| Received - Expulsions | 3 |
| | 56 |

| | |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Membership - Males | 99 |
| Females | 164 |
| | 263 |
| Sunday School - O. & T. | 15 |
| Scholars | 169 |
| | 184 |
| BYPU | 55 |
| Sunbeams | 30 |
| Total Funds | \$2,198.99 |

The report was singed by Rev. W. A. Ayers and S. M. Brinson, clerk, who noted value of church property \$20,000, seating capacity 800.

October 5, 1905 the committee on church repairs requested additional time to study the needs. Time was granted.

Again, the church voted to call on delinquent members relative to retaining them on the church roll if they would fulfill their obligations relative to the faith.

On October 9, 1905, 19 persons were baptized including George Holland who died recently, and his brother William who is a guest at the Masonic-Eastern Star Home in Greensboro. Eight persons were baptized November 20, 1905, including the late W. F. Dowdy, a long time deacon and Sunday School superintendent.

On November 26, 1905 the Christian Church, by request of their pastor was allowed use of our baptistry for baptism of candidates.

An invitation was extended to the Baptist State Convention by First Baptist and Tabernacle to meet in New Bern next year.

January 9, 1906, the deacons were authorized to install proper equipment for heating water in baptismal pool.

We have been unable to discover a reason for so doing, but many many times in the old records the Superintendent of the Sunday School resigned. July 1906 Brother McDaniel tendered his resignation, effective at once.

On the above, mentioned date, it was again voted to change the hymnals. Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. Green, and Miss Fannie Holland were appointed to choose the new books.

February 5, 1906, was the first time a church calendar was mentioned. Brother Whitty explained the calendar and it was adopted. The church treasurer was ordered to pay for same.

On the same day the building committee made a report with two amendments added - one providing for a change in the

small window in tower; and the other recommending that distance between pews be two inches greater than the specification called for. The committee was dismissed.

All of this leads us to believe that more changes were being made than the records show.

The Rev. Ayers announced that already he has in hand pledges to the amount of \$3,070.00. The pastor was authorized to appoint a building committee to have charge of the improvements to the church with full power to act. The committee were the following:

Sm. Brinson, Chairman
J. B. Holland
T. L. Cosby
R. F. Broadbudds
C.C. Clark, Jr.
A. D. Ward
W. L. Lewis

The committee was instructed to begin work as soon as practicable. The matter of carpeting was left entirely in the hands of the ladies.

March 22, 1906, the Building Committee outline plans for the renovation stating funds were in hand to do the interior work of the sanctuary which among other things, entailed the removal of the side galleries, and enhance the comfort and the appearance. These changes would curtail some of the seating and over-tax the space for special occasions. It would not be wise to subject the new and modern furnishing to the wear and tear of children in Sunday School.

Therefore an annex was recommended which would provide a class-room for each class. Insufficient funds were available to enlarge the annex, so a program of financing was necessary.

All work on both projects were to be done simultaneously in order to shorten time of the work of the church being disturbed. The ladies would select and purchase carpet. The total cost of the Renovation during Rev. Ayers pastorate exceeded \$10,000.00.

On the same date a committee was selected to oversee all matters dealing with the choir.

The matter continues on the subject of the church's claim against the U.S. Government. A Committee was appointed with full authority to employ lawyers and the presentation of the claim against said government.

May 20, 1906, during the renovation period, the Tabernacle

and the Centenary Methodist each offered their facilities for our worship. We accepted the Methodist because there was no conflict in the Sunday School meeting time service, since they met at a different hour.

On June 7, 1906, the pastors salary had been paid with \$100.00 left over. It was voted to present the amount to Rev. Ayers with a promise of \$1,200.00 for the next pastoral year.

We read with thanks and gratitude that our own dear Lessie Huggins, a long time Sunday School teacher, was received into the church by letter form Marshalburg, N. C. dated June 24, 1906.

July 2, 1906 special concern for the spiritual condition and the discipline of the church was discussed. The pastor reminded the church to practice a "spirit of brotherly love" as set down in the rules of the church.

July 26, 1906 the trustees were instructed to borrow money, up to \$3,000.00 necessary to the completion of the renovation. The Slade house was to be used as security.

December 16, 1906 our most beloved and faithful servant, Dr. Z. V. Parker was received into the church from Blakely, Georgia. His life was a shining light in the church until the day he died, when throngs, white and black, mourned his passing.

December 30, 1906, proper resolutions were adopted honoring Rev. W. A. Ayers for the ingenious planning, the securing of funds and his inspiration to the church as the edifice was transformed into a house of beauty, being practically rebuilt. It was a great, shining monument to his dedicated leadership.

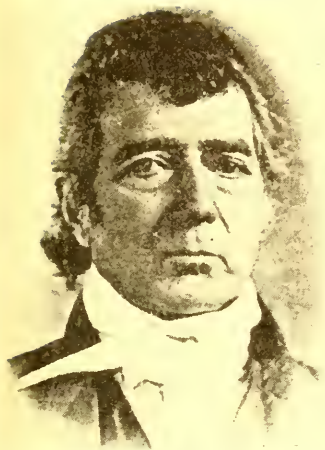
The minutes of the date do not mention the cost of the renovation, but from some source a \$20,000.00 figure emerged.

Resolutions of grateful appreciation were forwarded to the Centenary Methodist Official Board for the use of their fine facility during the months of our renovation.

On January 1907, Miss Fannie Holland was granted permission to plant trees to replace those cut down when the walks to the annex were built. The wish was granted. We marvel at the energies of this great christian servant.

The pastor of the Tabernacle Church having resigned, the congregation was invited to worship with us while they were without a pastor.

SOME OF THE EARLY PASTORS



THE REV. WILLIAM P. BIDDLE
First Pastor
1814-1818



DR. HIGHT C. MOORE
Pastor 1898-1903



REV. L. B. PADGETT
1914-1917



DR. W. H. HORTON
1924-1926

On March 12, 1907, Nell Douglas (Mrs. Z. V. Parker) was received from Flonville, Georgia. She had just married Dr. Parker.

October 7, 1907, in conference, a resolution was formed asking the trustees to sell the Slade lot on George/Broad Streets, and the Dunn lot, and apply said funds toward erecting a chapel at a suitable location in Riverside, naming same the "Slade Chapel". Furthermore, any funds not used for the project were to be applied to the retirement of the debt on the church building. A committee was appointed.

On October 17, 1907, the Atlantic Association requested that our church invite them to meet with us rather than at Swansboro as scheduled. A committee on entertainment was appointed to investigate and decide.

On October 24, 1907, the YMCA requested and was granted use of the church building for a mass meeting of all the churches the second Sunday in November.

November 27, 1907, Mrs. J. B. Blades was received into the church from Clayton, N. C.

December 29, 1907, Brother A. D. Ward announced that the meeting was called to consider the purchase of a new organ, one half the cost of said organ to be a gift from the above Mrs. J. B. Blades. The cost of the organ was listed as \$3,000.00 to \$3,500.00. The motion of the church to accept the gift of one half the cost of the organ was adopted, and suitable thanks were drafted to Mrs. Blades. Mrs. Blades left the church immediately afterwards; therefore, we do not believe the organ was purchased at this time.

Sunday, February 23, 1908, the pastor announced that he had received an urgent call to the Park Place Baptist Church of Norfolk, Virginia. So ends Rev. Ayers first pastorate, which was certainly a notable one, in that the church had shown marked progress in every department; from souls brought into the fold to physical enlargement and improvement of the property. He was destined to return in 1919, but we will address ourselves to that period later.

During April 1908, an ample supply of Bibles was purchased for use in the church.

During July 6 conference, the matter of building a chapel on the Dunn lot was once again tabled for further study.

The Rev. Charles L. Greaves was called to the pastorate July 16, 1908.

The letter of dismissal of Rev. W. A. Ayers went to the College Hill Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia, and not to the Norfolk Church to which he had been urgently called; the date was September 17, 1908.

Rev. Greaves arrived in November. His salary was fixed at \$1,500.00 per annum, the parsonage and moving expenses.

On January 4, 1909, Brother A. D. Ward reported for the chapel committee. He said times were hard, the mill had closed down and it was inadvisable to build at the time. The matter was continued.

In March of 1909, the subject of adequate classrooms for Sunday School was still being discussed. Dr. Z. P. Parker, Assistant Superintendent, announced that \$700.00 was on hand for the purpose, probably one half of the amount needed. A new committee was appointed.

April 5, 1909 appropriate thanks were extended to Mrs. Underwood for having placed a concrete walk at the parsonage.

Plans were underway at the same time for the church to have paved a concrete walk from church steps to the sidewalk.

At this time beautiful marble mantels were given to the church to be installed in the parsonage.

July 8, 1909, Brother Green reported that the cement walk had been poured. The treasurer was authorized to pay him the balance due.

The Pastor was authorized to appoint the following committees:

1. House and Grounds
2. Ministerial Education
3. Old Ministers Relief
4. Orphanage
5. State Missions
6. Home Missions
7. Foreign Missions

Notes from the Associational letter of October 1909, are as follows:

| | |
|----------------|----|
| GAINED Baptism | 17 |
| Letter | 37 |
| Total | 54 |
| LOST Letter | 21 |
| Expulsion | 8 |
| Death | 3 |
| Erased | 35 |
| Total | 67 |

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| MEMBERSHIP males | 141 |
| Females | 196 |
| Total | 337 |

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| FUNDS HANDLED | \$4,081.12 |
| MISSION BARREL | \$88.15 NOT INCLUDED |

In March of 1910, the question of individual communion cups was heard. Letters were received from thirty some pastors who advocated the change. The final decision would be announced at a later conference. (Use of individual cups was adopted in April).

The Conference of April 7, had the following to say:

- “1. Use interest received on Slade House to make payments due on note to Brother J. B. Holland.
2. Extend thanks to Brother Sawyer for installing two lights in annex.
3. That church yard not be used as a pasture for horses, cattle, goats etc.”

April 28, 1910, Brother W. B. Smith stated that the organ was badly in need of repair. (This confirms that a new one was not purchased.)

The Pastor read and suggested the adoption of a rule defining the “Spiritual Committee”. It was printed as follows:

Duties of the Spiritual Committee.

It shall be the duty of this Committee--

1. To labor with and seek to reclaim the erring members of the church. To investigate all serious reports reflecting on the character and conduct of any member of the church, and when considered for the best interest of the individuals and of the church to report to the church the results of their investigation with or without recommendation as to the course to be taken by the church in dealing with the person offending.
2. To investigate all protracted absence from the worship of the church on the part of any of its members, to labor with such members to restore them to the path of duty, and in the event of failure to report such members to the church for its final action.
3. To keep in touch when possible with all non-resident members of the church, to induce them when considered expedient, to secure letters and to join some church nearer their place of residence. The committee shall report to the church the names of all non-resident members who do not keep in satisfactory touch with the church, with recommendation as to the best course to be followed in dealing with them.
4. The pastor of the church shall be ex officio chairman of this committee, and shall call it together whenever a meeting is needed. Moreover this committee may have regular times of meeting, as often as seems necessary to the committee.
5. In cases of unusual difficulty the committee may call in the deacons of the church

to assist them in their work, and when so called each deacon shall have all the rights of a regular member of the committee.

6. Whenever a specific charge of unchristian conduct is to be rendered against a member the said member shall be notified by the committee that he may appear before the church at the time indicated and answer the charges. In exceptional cases the committee may present charges without the prior notification but in every case must inform the church that such is the case.

7. In cases of simple erasure for protracted absence on the part of non-resident members the notification shall not be necessary. Persons whose names are so erased shall not be regarded as expelled, but their membership shall be considered as lapsed and terminated by their own negligence.

The November 1910 report to the Atlantic Association, we note that the membership was 356, Sunday School 276, Aid Society 47, Sunbeams 35. Funds accounted for were \$4,039.75. The report was signed by Rev. Greaves, and S. W. Brinson.

Thursday, January 12, 1911 Rev. Greaves resigned his pastorate to return to Hawkinsville, Georgia where he felt he could do a better service in the Kingdom of the Lord. The resignation was accepted, and a pulpit committee was elected.

Different ministers were invited to preach during the interim.

March 27, 1911, Rev. E. T. Carter, DD, of Mt. Airy, North Carolina, was called as pastor at a salary of \$1,500.00, use of the parsonage and cost of removing his family and belongings from Mt. Airy.

August 9, 1911, the church in conference heard the following organ report Re: "The organ has been repaired, tuned, and a proper motor provided. A Ross Water Motor used a year or two at Meredith College was purchased and installed for \$100.00." Meredith College had paid \$250.00 for it.

Dr. Carter announced that he expected to organize a class of Bible Study for adults in the Sunday School.

In February 1912, ushers were appointed for the church. This was the first mention we have noted of them.

In March 7, 1912 insurance officials notified the church of certain deficiencies about the building regarding fire protection, naming the absence of asbestos covering of pipes leading from the furnace. Deacons were instructed to observe the recommended safety measures.

June 23, 1912, Dr. Carter asked for and was granted a leave of absence to visit his former home in England.

October 7, 1912, Dr. Carter made the announcement that he had visited the members of the church who lived in River-

side, relative to building a chapel there. All but one opposed the idea, stating that they preferred to come downtown to church. The matter was postponed indefinitely.

January 13, 1913 in conference, the church noted its' poor financial condition. The pastor, Dr. Carter, was authorized to appoint a committee who would devise a workable financial plan, and implement same. Perhaps this was the birth of our present day budget plan.

Sunday morning May 11, 1913, a committee of five men and Mrs. Mary Mitchel (not the founder) and Miss Lessie Huggins was appointed as a committee to collect Mission Funds to aid the building of a mission in Soachow China.

In the report of the "Spiritual Committee" of January 8, 1914 it was noted with regret that there was a decline in membership, attendance at church services, and in contributions.

April 16, 1914, Dr. E. T. Carter resigned his pastorate.

May 7, 1914, a pulpit committee composed of Brothers Whitty, Smith, and Whitehurst was appointed.

The Rev. L. B. Padgett was chosen to succeed Dr. Carter. He preached the first time at the conference of June 11, 1914.

Changes! Changes! Changes! The church decided in June to begin the use of the Duplex Envelope system.

The city was divided into wards with two or more deacons appointed to canvass each ward.

The church also voted to engage a person to assist with the collection of the church funds at 10% of the gross collected.

The church voted to install electric fans in the church. The matter was left to the discretion of Rev. Padgett, who announced at the next conference that ceiling fans would cost \$140.00; wall fans, \$114.00. The completion of the project was paced in the hands of the deacons.

I believe we failed to say in the beginning that Rev. Padgett was offered a salary of \$1,500.00 per annum, plus the parsonage.

In October plans were formulated to hold a "protracted" meeting in the near future.

During the October conference, Brother Brinson made a talk relative to moving the churchyard fence and other improvements. A vote of thanks was given the pastor for his diligence in supervising the work.

January 7, 1915, the church voted to use electric lights in

the church and Sunday School rooms to replace the gas lights now being used, as a matter of economy.

The 25th Annual session of the Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina met with the First Baptist Church in New Bern, March 23-26, 1915. Rev. Padgett was pastor, as you know, and Mrs. T. J. Mitchel was president of the local Woman's Missionary Society.

Mrs. J. B. Blades who had left the church earlier to return to Greensboro had returned and is general chairman of the entertainment committee.

Rev. J. H. N. Summerell of the First Presbyterian Church gave the devotional and the noted Dr. J. Clyde Turner of Greensboro preached the annual sermon. Our own beloved Mrs. Charles (Mamie Berry) Hall gave the address of welcome.

Miss Fannie E. S. Heck, president, could not attend because of illness. Her address was read.

At the Wednesday evening session. Rev. E. H. McWhorter, Methodist Minister, led the devotional. Rev. Livingston, of Raleigh gave the address on "What's In A Name". Mrs. D. W. Herring, Missionary who spoke on "China and Work Among Our Women", also spoke Wednesday Evening.

The meeting continued through Friday. Many outstanding persons spoke, including missionaries. Among the list were:

Rev. Victor I Masters of Atlanta, Ga.
Miss Sophia Lanneau from China
Rev. Hight C. Moore, former pastor
Rev. B. F. Huske, Rector of Christ Church
Rev. Robert Logan from China
Mrs. Clyde Turner of Greensboro
Mrs. W. E. Daniel of Weldon
Mrs. J. W. Bunn
Mrs. H. C. Moore, Raleigh

Listed on the page of "General Information" in the wonderful program booklet, we found tucked in the following: "A rest room for the ladies has been prepared in J. S. Miller's furniture store, opposite the church."

We think it very strange that no mention was made of this outstanding event in the church minutes. Our information came from an old souvenir program ravaged by time. It will be placed among other old programs in the Archives room.

The old history is so fascinating and so real! Now, as I turn the pages, trying to draw from them, the events, times and places, as well as people that will be of most interest to you; I come face to face with names so dear and familiar to me.

Some of these people are alive and serving the Master in the church today--Sunday June 26,1983.We give thanks for them, and for all the departed saints of God who served so well, so long.

Among the many persons who came into the church during the period around 1915 were Mr. N. E. Mohn and his wife Florence who were baptized Sunday June 17, 1915. Both were active in the church, Mr. Mohn having served as general Secretary of the Sunday School for more than fifty years.

In the church conference of June 17, 1915, a letter of thanks was read from the Disciples of Christ for the unused motor the church had given them for their organ.

The matter of calling a pastor came up, and by unanimous vote, the pastor L. B. Padgett, was called for another twelve months. (The system of calling a pastor every year was evidently still in force.)

One June 27, 1915, Mrs. W. B. Smith resigned as organist. A committee composed of Mrs. W. J. Lucas, Mrs. W. L. Lewis and S. M. Brinson called upon Mrs. Smith to persuade her to "change her mind". Later she reported that she had not changed her mind, but she would play a while longer!

During the same church conference, the church voted to send \$50.00 to Wake Forest Church to apply on their building debt.

In conference July 22, 1915, the deacons raised the question of exchanging our "church lot" in Riverside for one that is 50 feet deeper. It was ordered by the church that Brother S. M. Brinson draw up the deed.

Brother Brinson reminded the church that it was "indebted to the estate of our lot". It was decided that the \$960.00 net amount collected from the U. S. Government for use of the church during the Civil War, be applied on the debt. (We were pleased to read that the matter with the U.S. Government had been resolved).

The conference of January 13,1916, brought forth a discussion on the matter of a church social. The time decided upon was Friday night before first Sunday in February. Rev. W. N. Johnson was invited to speak, and every member was urged to be present.

During conference of March 9, 1916, announcement was made that the amount due to the estate of J. B. Holland had been settled; the receipt contained such settlement that on June

1, 1916, the church would receive interest on \$2,000.00 as left by him. It would amount to about \$80.00 annually.

May 11, 1916 Rev. L. B. Padgett, Dr. Z. V. Parker and Miss Fannie Holland were elected to represent the church at the Southern Baptist Convention which met in Asheville May 17-22.

June 8, 1916 the funds of the bequest of J. B. Holland, at his earlier request were placed in the New Bern Banking and Trust Co. to the credit of the First Baptist Church, with interest.

Rev. Padgett was granted a leave of absence for the week of June 25, for the purpose of getting married.

June 25 a conference was called, the purpose being stated by W. B. Smith to wit: "To authorize payment of \$100.00 to carpenters for the removing of two windows on the back of the building, (Sunday School Rooms) and adding a platform leading from the double door, and for arranging three windows in the southwest corner, providing for more light and air." A committee was appointed to decide the feasibility of placing an awning on the back.

The church also devised ways to secure larger Mission offerings toward the Foreign Mission Debt of \$180,000.00.

In conference September 21, 1916 W. P. Metts in the chair, was on a committee to ascertain the cost of wiring for electric lights where needed, to be used in place of gas lights.

September 28, 1916 the committee on the subject of the organ bellows, stated that an electric motor could be secured, without wiring, for \$225.00. The matter was continued.

The Associational Letter for October 1916 lists the membership as 353, the pastors' salary \$1,863.00; the Womans' Missionary Society 40 and total funds \$6,239.03. We're moving on up!

The organ was constantly in need of repair. December 7, 1916, the church voted, as recommended by the organ committee, to purchase an electric motor and repair bellows at a cost of \$250.00.

It is notable that on January 11, 1917 that Brother C. W. Burch of Balbo, the "Sweet Singer of Israel", was present, and sang for us.

February 8, 1917, Brother W. F. Dowdy declined to become financial secretary, so N. E. Mohn was elected after resigning as treasurer of the Benevolent Fund.

At this time Rev. Padgett recommended some changes in the financial system, cited as great improvements by Mr. Mohn.

For some time the church has stressed the lack of teachers in the Sunday School. Upon request of the pastor the following persons were elected as teachers:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Mrs. J. H. Swayer | Mrs. Charles Hall |
| Mrs. J. J. Rhodes | Dr. Z. V. Parker |
| Mrs. Josephine Snelling | Mrs. C. W. Blanchard |
| Mrs. D. B. Wood | Mrs. T. J. Mitchell |
| Miss Eva Dixon | J. L. McDaniel |
| W. F. Dowdy | |

Some were to be substitutes.

The question of Sunday School rooms was again brought before the church in May 1917. The need was vital--the cost would be about \$3,000.00. It was continued, again!

Attached to a page of the Book of minutes is a time worn typed copy page which says in part: "Whereas the bequest of a faithful and beloved member Zacheous Slade which was approximately \$7,500.00 is now about \$1,500.00. Be it resolved that this final amount be placed in trust as a memorial to his memory, and shall not be diverted for other causes. Only the income of said account is to be used."

October 21, 1917, seven members and the deacons were appointed as delegates to the Association Meeting in Kinston. A part of our church letter taken is as follows:

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Membership | 363 |
| Pastors Salary | \$1,860.00 |
| Foreign Missions | \$322.87 |
| Total Funds | \$6,743.82 |
| Baptisms 19 - Letter 7 | |
| State Missions | \$690.82 |
| Home Missions | \$419.26 |
| S.S. Enrollment | 260 |
| BYPU | 40 |

November 25, 1917 Rev. Padgett resigned his pastoral charge effective at once, citing the reason that he had been offered a great opportunity with YMCA. The resignation was accepted with regret.

Now seems a good time to set down on paper the names of some of the faithful of this period. Again, we do it with fear and trembling being afraid that we may overlook even one who has been a pillar in the church. If we have, please forgive.

Metts
Duffy
Whitehurst
Holland
Whitty
Ward
Lucas
Brinson

Mohn
Smith
Mitchel
Parker
Hall
Blanchard
Hagood
Hardison

Battle
Jacobs
Clark
Rea
Cuthrell
Lovelace

It also seems timely to mention the faithful service of Mrs. W. B. Smith to the church. She played the organ for a long time gratuitously, and was never a member of the church. Mr. Smith, of course belonged as did their daughter Laura. Certainly, Mrs. Smith has received her reward in heaven!

December 16, 1917, a pulpit committee was appointed. They were: W. B. Smith, A. D. Ward, W. J. Lucas, Dr. Z. V. Parker, W. F. Dowdy and N. E. Mohn.

February 1, 1918, a committee was called to meet in Kinston on February 19, to learn more about the "Million Dollar Campaign."

The Rev. A. A. Walker of Mission Valley, Mississippi, was called to the pastorate. He accepted the call effective March 1, 1918. The salary mentioned was \$2,100.00 and the use of the parsonage plus moving expenses.

Members were reminded not to tell Rev. Walker all they knew the first time they see him, but to save some things because he might be around one year or five!!

February 24, 1918, Mrs. W. B. Smith resigned as organist. A committee was appointed to secure Mrs. J. B. Blades, who accepted.

Rev. Walker, his wife and three children were accepted by letter.

May 9, 1918, the church went on record as willing to give \$1,000.00 on the campaign for education.

May 23, John Waters, who was called to become a soldier, was received upon his profession of faith. This occurred at Prayer Service.

June 6, 1918, The W. M. S. asked the church to employ a trained worker from the Louisville Training School for a period of two months as a trial. The W. M. S. would contribute \$10.00 of the \$50.00 required. The motion was carried.

July 11, 1918, Rev. Walker suggested that the funds of the W. M. S. go through the regular church treasurer.

A revival was being planned for the month of November.

Excerpts from the November 1918 church letter to the Association are as follows:

| | | | |
|---------------|-----|-------------------|-------------|
| Baptism | 7 | Value of property | \$40,000.00 |
| Letter | 36 | Home Missions | 484.40 |
| Membership | 392 | State Missions | 599.64 |
| Sunday School | 221 | Foreign Missions | 628.72 |
| BYPU | 50 | TOTAL FUNDS | \$6,748.49 |

July 20, 1919 Rev. A. A. Walker resigned asking that his salary continue through August since he had had no vacation. His was a short pastorate, lasting only one year and two months. That was not much time to perform outstanding accomplishments.

Sunday August 17, 1919, the church voted to help to entertain the workers who would be in the city in September in interest of the \$75,000,000 Campaign for the cooperative program or its forerunner.

W. B. Smith was elected chairman of the new pulpit committee. Sixteen persons were named to serve with him.

Dr. W. A. Ayers was recalled as pastor at a salary of \$3,000.00, and the parsonage. The call was extended September 4, and he was on the field and conducted his first service Thursday, October 9, 1919. He, his wife, and son Cary were received from Durham, North Carolina Baptist Church, October 9. Mary and Jane Ayers were accepted October 19.

In conference November 6, thanks was given to Mr. Charles Hall for lumber used for staging in painting the church.

The November, 1919, Association Meeting revealed little difference in our letter of report from last one:

| | |
|---------------|------------|
| Membership | 395 |
| Sunday School | 221 |
| Total funds | \$7,404.31 |

In the back of the book of minutes, we uncovered a brief page of a report of Womans' Missionary Society. Quarter ending May 1, 1918.

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Members | 60 |
| New Members | 10 |
| Mission Study Classes | 5 |
| Visits to jail | ? |
| Visits made | 375 |
| Garments to Poor | 41 |
| Home Mission Offering | \$147.24 |
| Memorial Fund | 4.85 |
| Association Expenses | 2.50 |
| Service Flag | 3.75 |

Signed, Mrs. F. G. Battle, President.

Rev. H. A. Humble was thanked for preaching the funeral for our faithful sexton of 23 years, Robert Styron while our own pastor was out of the city.

November 23, 1919 Dr. Z. V. Parker and N. E. Mohn were appointed to purchase 125 new hymn books for the church.

Mr. Mohn was elected treasurer of the \$75,000,000 campaign, of the Southern Baptist Convention and members were urged to pay their pledges.

The terms of some deacons having expired, Brother A. M. Rea and Harry M. Jacobs were elected to replace them December 18, 1919.

January 18, 1920 the morning worship period was given for the purpose of a dedication service for the flag in memory of the boys who served in World War One.

July 1, 1920 the Union Service of the Annual Meeting of the Female Benevolent Society of the city was held in the First Baptist Church with the pastor Rev. W. A. Ayers delivering the sermon.

In our time we have had very serious issues arise when there were decided differences of opinion among members. Such a situation arose in March of 1920.

Earlier (we cannot find it recorded in Court House) the church had taken an option on a lot at the corner of Johnson and Middle Streets where the Public Library now stands. In the minutes of March 7, 1920, a two page document of resolutions signed by A. D. Ward, Dr. Z. V. Parker and B. F. Hagood is attached, setting forth reasons for selling the present church property which had been appraised at \$75,000.00 moving three and a half blocks and building another for \$75,000.00 or more, without furnishings.

A large group of members supported the move, including the young people.

Blueprints for the building were submitted by Herbert L. Cain, church architect of Richmond, Virginia, on March 2, 1920.

Committees were appointed to research titles, investigate loans and any other plans pertinent to building a new church.

Announcement was made that \$100,000.00 could be raised from the sale of the church facility. The pastor was empowered to choose a committee of five to spearhead all negotiations. They were A. C. Ward, T. J. Mitchel, Dr. Z. V. Parker, W. J. Lucas and N. E. Mohn.

March 28, 1920, there was a further communication from the

committee saying that they approved the sketches for the new church, and they recommended the payment of \$22,000.00 balance be paid on the Disosway lot. (Place chosen for church).

In the meanwhile a letter dated March 27, 1920, signed by W. J. Lucas and T. J. Mitchel, who described themselves as the "minority" of the committee, arrived opposing the sale and or the building of a new church. Their theory was to better equip the present property, built on hallowed ground and dedicated to Almighty God.

There was much more pro and con concerning the matter. We stand as a living monument today to the defeat of the project, for which we give thanks.

The minutes leave the matter rest for now and go on to other matters pertinent to the day to day operation of the church.

April 15, 1920 Brother W. J. Lucas, and Brother W. L. Lewis resigned as treasurer and assistant treasurer. We wonder if this resulted from negotiations concerning moving the church.

Sunday May 2, 1920, Robert L. Pugh, among other persons, presented himself for baptism. That was the beginning of long years of dedicated Christian service in the Vineyard of the Lord. In July he presented himself for the gospel ministry. The church authorized and licensed him to exercise his gift in obedience to the call of God. That he did faithfully, until the day he died. More later.

May 23, 1920, there was another typed page attached to book of minutes authorizing the building committee to sell the church property for \$75,000.00, and to take the cash payment, and take the notes and mortgage of the purchaser.

July 8, 1920, Mrs. Fred Whitty was appointed to "take care" of the communion service; to see that the bread and wine were ready at the appointed time. This service she continued almost to the day she died.

At this time may we pause to remember and give thanks for others of our young people who dedicated themselves to Christian service during the same period as Robert Lee Pugh.

Ethel Holman Eaton (Mrs. C. R. Pittard), John Lane and Robert Pugh committed their lives at the same service.

Ethel entered Southern Baptist Theological Seminary - Womans Missionary Union Training School September 1923, and graduated in May 1925. Her definite plans to become a full time Christian servant in her Masters kingdom were changed when she met the ministerial student, C. Robert

Pittard, at the Seminary. They were married June 15, 1926, and became a team. She has been of invaluable help and inspiration to Dr. Pittard in his several pastorates in N. C., Georgia and Florida over a long period of years. They have retired and "come home" to the church Ethel joined in 1915. We thank God for their presence, and their service among us.

John Lane and Lillian Bryant Lane, after college, attended our seminary in New Orleans. As a husband and wife team they served as educational director and youth director for five years. They served in the South Carolina Convention for a time. In 1931, they returned to North Carolina State Convention serving as associates in the Sunday School Department with Mr. Perry Morgan. In 1944 they accepted places of responsibility in the South Carolina Convention once again; this time in the Training Union Department. John went to his heavenly reward while in the Master's service there.

After retiring January 1, 1969 Mrs. Lane "came home" to her old church, and has been a faithful steward of herself and her possessions ever since. Now, on the sunset side of 80, she continues to teach her Sunday School class of middle-aged adults; she is active in the Womans Missionary Union, and attends worship services regularly. Her limitless energy and her complete dedication to the ministries of the church continue to amaze all of us who are younger than she.

Nathan Brooks, among others, joined the church October 31, 1920 and was baptised with 25 others November 4, 1920. He was ordained to the ministry, graduated from Wake Forest and Southern Seminary; has been a pastor, Secretary of N. C. Baptist Training Union, President of the W. M. U. Training School, and director of Church Services of the North Carolina State Convention. His sister Ernell Brooks was baptised February 2, 1926, and also dedicated her life to Christian service. Nathan Brooks retired in 1977.

January 6, 1921, a new music committee was elected consisting of W. B. Smith, Carlyle Harker and Mrs. C. H. Hall. Many committees were being appointed at this period in the life of the church—baptism, ushers etc.

In February Mr. N. E. Mohn reported on the \$75,000.000 fund and noted that it was encouraging.

The "Poor Fund" continued to be collected as it has been through the years.

On April 7, 1921, the church membership was reported to

be 505. It is unreal how rapidly the church was growing. It was not unusual to baptize ten or more at one time.

October 23, 1921 delegates were appointed to the Association, and excerpts from the associational letter are here listed.

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| By Baptism | 46 |
| Letter | 33 |
| Total Membership | 518 |
| Pastor's Salary | \$3,000.00 |
| Poor Fund | \$306.00 |
| Total Missions | \$2,025.53 |
| Sunday School enrolled | 345 |
| Orphanage Fund | \$434.47 |
| W.M.S. | 70 |
| Y. W. A. | 28 |
| Sunbeams | 24 |
| R. A.'s | 21 |

Sunday School and collections from organizations were not included.

We were praised for having done outstanding work during the year.

January 5, 1922, the church voted to borrow \$1,000.00 from the Slade Memorial Fund to help pay note due Cap't. Jne. Day. The note shows that only \$800.00 was borrowed.

April 6, 1922, the church voted to pay \$10.00 monthly toward the publishing of the Atlantic Monthly.

Faithful, beloved Samuel M. Brinson went to reap the reward he so richly deserved. His service was held on Mothers' Day May 14, 1922. Judge R. A. Nunn spoke of "Brinson, the sterling friend". Hon. W. D. Upshaw praised him as "a Christian Statesman".

He was church clerk for 17 years, and a deacon for many.

August 10, 1922, the church voted to pay \$15.00 monthly toward the support of the New Orleans Bible Institute.

The pastor was excused that he might arrive early at the State Convention in Winston-Salem, December 13, 1922, in order to speak in behalf of the Junior College and to try to secure it for New Bern. Other delegates arrived later.

The Examining Committee appointed to examine Robert Lee Pugh for the gospel ministry, unanimously recommended that he be accepted. The report was signed by: B. W. Spellman, Chairman, J. L. Hodges, W. A. Ayers, L. M. B. White, C. W. Blanchard. The report was not dated but was received in early 1923. Robert was ordained January 18, 1923.

If we mentioned all of the accomplishments of this great

man, the history would never be completed. We shall simply say that in the church his leadership was unsurpassed. He was first a minister, a deacon and a long time devoted Sunday School teacher.

In the field of public education he was a teacher, a principal and for many years Superintendent of Public Instruction of the Craven County School system. An educational office complex, and a waterside theater are named in his honor..

In the fraternal Order of Ancient and Accepted Free Masonry, he attained the highest honor; that of a 33 degree Scottish Rite Mason. He was Past Grand Master of The Grand Lodge of North Carolina. He was a Shriner and past Potentate of Sudan Shrine Temple.

In the Archives Room in the church, hanging above a fine mahogany highboy (given by Mrs. Pugh) is a portrait of Mr. Pugh, donated by his Sunday School class in his memory. His Ordination Bible is also there, and the fine silver offering plates in use today were also given to the church some years ago, in his honor by his wife. The influence of this great man lives on.

In conference September 6, 1923, the church voted to make some needed repairs on the parsonage; the work estimated to cost about \$450.00. The Ladies Aid Society was to assist with decisions concerning the work. Rev. W. A. Ayers resigned May 3, 1923 - effective June 1.

At the same time resolutions were made concerning delinquent members. Anyone who had been absent for one year and had not contributed in any measure was to show cause why the name should not be dropped from the membership roll of the church.

The church voted to invite a Rev. Horton of Louisiana to come to New Bern in November to conduct a ten day meeting.

September 23, 1923, Robert L. Pugh conducted his last service before returning to Wake Forest College to resume his studies. He left with the love and appreciation of the church and a purse of \$100.00.

Since Rev. W. A. Ayers had resigned, Rev. C.W. Blanchard, a member, attempted to counsel the church regarding what he termed "wholesale expulsion" of members because of negligence to their Christian duties and responsibilities. He said this was contrary to Baptist usage and a complaint should include a specific charge. The matter was continued.

On September 27, 1923, there is still another entry in the minutes regarding the sale of the church property, namely that the price should be lowered.

On October 25, 1923, a pastoral call was extended to Rev. W. H. Horton of Louisiana at a salary of \$3,600.00 per annum. He, his wife and son and daughter were received into the church February 7, 1924.

March 6, 1924, the First Baptist Church met in conference. A Steering Committee for the closing of the 75,000,000 program was appointed. Rev. C. W. Blanchard, Dr. Z. V. Parker, N. E. Mohn and the pastor, Rev. Horton, were named. There was no announcement noting the amount subscribed to it. From time to time it was reported through the minutes, that pledges were not being paid on time.

Once again changes! On May 8, 1924, the church hired S. C. Rushing to be the assistant pastor at a salary of \$2,400. per year. The call to him was unanimous. This was the first time in the history of the church that a pastor had any clerical assistance.

Mr. Rushing either decided against the call, or he left soon after because the minutes of October 5, 1924, indicate that the new assistant pastor, Bro. Zach West, has just arrived on the field with his wife and son Eugene. They were received by letter from Ensley, Alabama.

In the same conference, messengers were appointed to the Association Meeting at Fort Barnwell.

Bro. Lyle, pastor of Fremont was present at the meeting; and spoke highly of Mr. Blanchard in his work in the association but he warned against some literature which was being used. He said it might undermine the faith of some who are weak.

The new assistant pastor presided at the December conference in the absence of Rev. Horton who was attending the State Convention in Raleigh.

July 30, 1925, Mr. West, the assistant pastor resigned to be effective October 1. There evidently was some difficulty with the office of assistant pastor, since two came and went in such a short period of time.

In the conference of September 16, 1925, the church voted to entertain the association for the next meeting. A committee was appointed to secure homes for the delegates.

February 10, 1926, the church met in conference. The

trustees discussed the matter of securing the money left by W. T. Hill, in his will, to use as a payment on the pastor's salary.

Recently (1983), our church has considered the possibility of a Southern Baptist work in Vanceboro. The effort has not been encouraging. However, we do know that at one time there was Baptist work in the area. The conference of May 30, 1926, states that six young women (names are given) were converted in a protracted meeting in Vanceboro.

Sunday, July 25, 1926, Dr. Horton submitted his resignation and it was accepted.

August 18, 1926, letters were granted to Dr. Horton and his family to join a Baptist Church in Texas.

The church immediately called to the pastorate, Dr. A. O. Boda of Venable Church, Richmond, Virginia. The call was made August 2, 1926, at a salary of \$3,600. per annum.

Rev. C. W. Blanchard, who had been a member of our church for quite some time as he served in nearby churches in the association, was granted his letter December 29, 1926 in order to join one of the churches he now served.

The first official duty of Dr. Boda was to invite the pastor of Tabernacle Church and its members to meet with First Baptist in March in a series of meetings conducted by Rev. H. Mengle of Dunn.

In turn the Tabernacle invited First Baptist members to meet with them on two successive Wednesday nights to hear Dr. Worthheimer, a converted Jew. The church voted to dispense with prayer meeting those two nights.

We have observed from time to time, that there does exist between the two churches, a warm, friendly relationship which continues to this present time. We are grateful! Incidentally, the great man, Rev. J. L. Hodges had already assumed the pastorate of Tabernacle. He preached there more than twenty five years. He died in the pulpit.

We wish we had more detail concerning the church programs during these years and those preceding. The minutes usually include ample information about the election of officers, the funds and the reception of members, but has little to say about the actual ministry of the church.

Once again, the time for the observance of the Lord's Supper was changed from every first Sunday to one Sunday a quarter. The pastor believed it would be more sacred to those who partook. The time was February, 1927, and the change

had been going on for more than a century of time.

At a conference of February 16, 1927, Dr. Boda was empowered to disburse the "Poor Fund". Let it be said again, and again, the Baptists have always made an effort to take care of their poor and underprivileged.

Also at the same conference the church trustees were instructed to arrange and complete the sale of the piece of property at the corner of Johnson and Middle Streets known as the Disosway Land and admonished to be diligent in getting a price sufficient to pay all indebtedness on said property.

Therefore----let us put to rest the idea of selling the church property, and erecting another. It wasn't meant to be!

April 6, 1927, by mutual consent, the pastor of Tabernacle and First Baptist agreed to change pulpits in order to create interest in the upcoming revival at which Bro. C. H. Mengal of Lebanon, Pa., would speak.

Fifteen persons were baptised April 13; several of these persons work actively in our church today.

April 14, 1927, a United States Census of Religious Bodies was taken by the Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Washington, D. C. The following facts were taken from the report: Our church-

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Males | 227 |
| Females | 338 |
| Total | 565 |
| Under 13 years | 33 |
| Value of Edifice | 50,000 |
| Debt | None |
| Expenses | \$7,497.85 |
| Benevolences etc. | \$2,542.45 |
| Total | \$10,040.50 |
| No. of Ministers | 1 |

College attended Temple

June 22, 1927, Dr. Boda was granted leave of absence, including a Sunday, to assist with the work of the State Convention.

On that Sunday, the church joined with the American legion for a union service.

The months of July and August, 1927, the Presbyterian, Centenary Methodist and First Baptist churches agreed to have union services on Sunday evenings with the ministers rotating.

The Associational letter of June 11, 1927 shows little change from the last report. There were 44 additions to the church with a total membership of 562. The Sunday School roll shows

260, with an average attendance of 190. \$7,872.54 was given for local expenses, and the mission offering was \$2,445.90.

May 13, 1928, again a building committee was elected with Mr. W. F. Dowdy as chairman.

The association met in Ft. Barnwell, November 7-8, 1928. Below some facts are re-copied from the report of our church. The report shows growth.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Members last year | 562 |
| This year - Baptism | 17 |
| Letter | 23 |
| Statement | 1 |
| Total | 582 |
| Losses, letters & Deaths | 21 |
| Sunday School | 260 |
| Teachers | 22 |
| Total | 282 |
| Sunday School Funds | \$699.71 |
| Church Expenses | \$8,498.12 |
| Missions | \$2,197.96 |
| (First time) Co-operative Program | \$1,129.31 |

December 29, 1928, committees and deacons were elected for the following year. Among these was a new Music Committee composed of Mrs. Charles Hall, Mrs. C. P. Harker, and W. B. Smith.

Researching and recording this history for you is becoming more and more fascinating: many of the persons who are no longer on the scene of action, I knew and loved. Many are still among us today. With them I have a long-standing friendship which I continue to cherish day by day as we work together. Many new "church friends" we add as time goes by. My hope is that they will cultivate a love for the church and her people just as I have done during my long years here.

On June 2, 1929, the minister tendered his resignation to become effective September 30, 1929, or sooner if a new field of service was open to him. His ministry had lasted three years, and he regretted that it had not always been fulfilling, that there were members who did not support him and wished him to leave. Dr. Boda asked for prayers in making a decision.

Attached to the page of minutes of September 29, 1929 is a beautifully written memorial expression for Mr. William Luther Lewis, (Miss Tillie's husband) William Joseph Lucas, and Mrs. Dowdy, the wife of William F. Dowdy. Their love for their families, their dedication to their church, and their great interest in civic affairs is extolled.

The lengthy memorial resolution was signed by J. F. Cuthrell, J. B. Lovelace, and W. B. Smith. Copies were sent to the families of each person. Their passing left a tremendous void in the church.

March 6, 1930, Dr. Oscar Haywood became the "supply" (interim) pastor of the church.

As a side glance it is interesting to note that members continue to "switch" back and forth from Tabernacle to our church.

Now seems a good time to comment on the life and work of Miss Fannie Holland. Since joining the church many years ago, her name was constantly mentioned in the untold activities of the church in which she was involved. No task seemed too great or too small. Up to this point her name has been mentioned far more times than that of any other woman. Certainly her earthly efforts were rewarded with a heavenly crown.

April 23, 1930, again there was the need for repairing and painting the church walls. Three groups of committees were appointed.

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| Supervising Committee of | 3 |
| Raising of Funds | 14 |
| Decorating | 6 |

These people were charged with the responsibility of the project.

By this time Dr. Oscar Haywood had been the interim minister for almost a year. On November 23, 1930, the church issued a formal call for him to become the regular pastor at a salary of \$3,000.00 and the use of the parsonage. At the time of voting, 150 votes were cast with Dr. Haywood receiving 142.

Since Dr. Haywood was a single man at the time, we do not believe that he ever resided in the parsonage.

I remember him so well when I came to New Bern as a young woman. Often he was seen walking the streets downtown; always flawlessly dressed--always--with coat and tie; I remember his brown suits. Dr. Haywood was a great theologian, a lofty individual. He seemed to have difficulty putting himself on the plane with the common man. He preached from the Holy Bible, never using far out modern day topics such as some ministers preach in this day and time. When one listened to Dr. Haywood preach, one went away having heard

a deeply spiritual sermon.

April 21, 1931, at a called conference, a motion was made and carried authorizing the negotiation of a loan from Branch Bank and Trust Co. in the amount of \$1,500.00 on a note signed by the trustees, and secured on a mortgage of the parsonage. The loan was made for the purchase of a new organ.

A "Sinking Fund" was begun, the purpose of which was to receive and devise means of raising money to pay for the organ. Mr. Edward Clark was elected chairman.

The new organ recently purchased from the "Wurlitzer" people, originally purchased by the Athens Theater, was dedicated Sunday, May 24, 1931. The sermon was preached by Dr. Haywood.

Thursday night, May 28, 1931, a beautiful organ recital was given by Dr. Poteat of Wake Forest College, to which the public was invited. A free will offering was taken for the benefit of the Organ Fund.

A tragedy occurred on November 27, 1931; the Tabernacle Church building and all of its equipment burned to the ground.

Two days later, on Sunday, Rev. Hodges preached in our church. Our church wrote a letter to the Tabernacle membership, offering them the use of our church or to join with us in our services.

Mrs. W. B. Smith evidently decided to become the church organist again. In an old list of officers and committees of the church in 1931, she was listed as organist, with Madge Harker and Martha Waters as assistants.

The reports of early 1932 deal entirely with the reception and or the granting of letters to members. We wish there were accounts of the happenings of the church, but there just aren't records available.

Perhaps we should again repeat that the historical events don't always appear to be in sequence. The reason--they aren't! While searching among the old records, we think we have all the information pertinent to a subject, so we record it. Later, when we least expect it we stumble on other facts which we simply cannot disregard. Therefore, we ask your understanding if and when the finished product is available.

February 1, 1933, in the church conference, motion was made and carried that repairs to the windows be made at a cost of \$90.00.

The Pastor, Dr. Oscar Haywood on March 8, 1933 was in-

structed to secure the services of Rev. C. H. Bolton of the First Church of West Palm Beach, Florida, to hold a series of meetings when he was enroute to the meeting of The Southern Baptist Convention in Washington, D. C. May 19, 1933. Dr. Hawood was also a delegate to the Convention.

In conference, April 19, 1933, the church appointed a committee to report to the church the advisability of soliciting funds to erect an educational building. Chosen to serve were: Mrs. J.M. West, Dr. Z. B. Parker, and C. W. Lewis.

November 7, being the day for voters to vote on the repeal of the 18th Amendment, the church voted to have the church bell rung at intervals throughout the entire day.

November 12, 1933, the church, through Dr. Haywood, invited the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina to hold its 1934 session with the First Baptist Church in New Bern.

With the election of new church officers for 1934, Mrs. W. B. Smith was requested to serve as organist with Madge Harker and Martha Waters as assistants.

In the January 28, 1934 conferences the church voted to secure a minister and a singer for a revival meeting in the month of April.

It was also voted that the liquidation of the organ debt be placed in the hands of the Men's Bible Class, and the Fidelis Class.

On June 28, 1934, the church voted to "sanction and cooperate" in the presentation of an Historical Pagaent by Miss Owens and Mrs. West during the meeting of the State Convention here in November.

In the last three reports of the treasurer, we note that the "old debt" remained \$1,007.71.

We do not understand why the many note worthy meetings are not mentioned in the records, such as The One Hundred and Fourth Session of The North Carolina State Convention, which convened in New Bern, November 13-16, 1934. At the same time the church observed its 125th year celebration. We have a partial copy of the program, which has a mistake on the first page. Zacchaeus Slade is listed as one of the founders instead of Mrs. Mary Willis Mitchel. Mr. Slade became a dynamic force in the church, but he was little more than a lad in 1809.

At the invitation of Centenary Methodist Church through Rev. A. J. Hobbs, the sessions of the convention were held

there because of inadequate space at First Baptist.

Notables who spoke during the several sessions were: Dr. Hight C. Moore, former pastor; Senator Josiah W. Bailey, Dr. Bernard Spilman, Dr. Henry W. Battle, former pastor; Dr. Haywood, host pastor.

January 6, 1935, was the first time we have noted the presence of a music director. J. D. Holmes was elected.

March 14, 1935, the Eunice-Lois Class asked permission to have the pulpit chairs repaired; permission was granted.

In April, 1935, the subject of the erection of an educational building again surfaced. Suggestion was made to contact Mr. Perry Morgan of the State Sunday School Department, who could be of assistance in securing free plans.

John Holmes, music director, asked to move the organ console and chairs to better promote the music program. He was directed to make the necessary changes.

June 13, 1935, the church voted, on recommendation of Sunday School Supt. W. F. Dowdy, to comply with requests of N. C. Dept. of Health to curtail gatherings of children during the epidemic of infantile paralysis in the state. The lower grades of the Sunday School were closed for the remainder of the summer.

September 4, 1935, Mrs. John Holmes, wife of the music director was hired as a "Church Visitor and General Worker". We remember her so well; she was a beautiful person with a magnificent singing voice.

During this period the treasurers report was always listed, but it appears too general to record in this history.

Through Mr. A. D. Ward, Dr. Oscar Haywood resigned his pastorate March 11, 1936. He gave as his reasons, "important considerations and extraordinary circumstances". Dr. Haywood had served the church long and well, and the members were grieved at his leaving.

We recall that Dr. Haywood retired to his family home in Mt. Gilead, N. C., and married his faithful housekeeper.

A most interesting and spiritually effective organization of the thirties was "The Craven County Christian Federation", led by Dr. Z. V. Parker and Ernest Gillikin of our church. It was not sponsored by the church - they promoted it almost single-handedly. The gospel meetings were held usually on Sunday afternoon, in a school auditorium or a public hall. Many souls were won to Christ through these services. Both

of these fine Christians gave so much of themselves for others. Mr. Gillikin died in 1945 while still a young man.

On May 31, 1936, the pulpit committee recommended that Rev. Raymond A. Thompson be called to the pastorate. He was invited by the deacons to come to New Bern to discuss the call, terms of salary, housing, etc. The next time Rev. Thompson was mentioned he was presiding at a meeting!

Mr. Thompson was a young man of average stature. He had a wife and two sons, the younger being born here not long after their arrival. Mrs. Thompson sang beautifully, and was a member of the choir.

We note on the monthly financial reports that Rev. Thompson was always paid, sometimes \$100.00, once \$200.00. That is all we know about his salary.

They resided in the parsonage on Johnson Street.

On Sept. 8, 1936, an invitation was extended to Centenary Methodist Church, to use any portion or all of our facility during the meeting of the annual Methodist conference.

The music director, Mr. John D. Holmes, resigned November 11, 1936, to take a position in Farmville, N.C.

We believe that it was during this period that Madge Harker Dixon had become the full time organist. We note in treasurer's report in January 1, 1937, she was paid \$25.00.

In October 6, 1937, a special conference was called to adopt the church letter to the Atlantic Association. No mention was made of the contents as was done in days gone by. Again, we deplore the scarcity of the records.

On October 31, 1937, at the evening service, an impressive "Mortgage Burning" service was conducted by Rev. Thompson. A free will offering had been taken to retire the parsonage debt, and pay on the church debt. Mr. Lovelace, the clerk failed to list the amount. A blank space was left in the report.

On the same day a committee of eleven persons was appointed to serve on the Educational Building Committee.

The assistant organist at this time was Mrs. J. W. Morton.

After many years, even with fear and trembling, perhaps we should record for you the names of some dedicated Christians who served the church well during this period. We may even mention some who continue after many, many years of service. Forgive if we overlook one!

| | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Waters | Shepherd | Berry | Kennedy |
| Fowler | Hart | Clark | Alexander |
| Slater | Russell | Hall | Lowery |
| Daniel | Dibble | Lovell | Maxwell |
| Huggins | Sawyer | Benners | Pugh |
| Morton | Dixon | Sledge | Pearson |
| Falls | Harker | Dowdy | Lovelace |
| Gillikin | Waters | Winfield | |

In a conference of February 9, 1938, Mrs. R. J. Shepherd deplored the fact of the lack of interest in the Educational Building Program, suggesting that a frequent financial report be made. The treasurer answered "There are no finances to report".

Some pastors are quite good leaders in building programs, while others perform less well.

During the conference of September 15, 1938, the furnace committee reported on the condition of the furnace. Mr. Hall responded with information that the present unit was beyond repair. Mr. Whitty was requested to act with the committee in the purchase of a new one.

On May 10, 1939, it is of interest that the building fund was growing. Pledges to the amount of \$5,149.54 had been made. Virgie Eaton was the treasurer.

January 30, 1939, Mr. Rhodes, who had been conducting and training the Sunday School Orchestra was advised that the church could no longer afford his \$30.00 monthly salary.

L. B. Daniel's suggestion of appointing a 24 member visiting committee was carried.

Upon recommendation of the Board of Deacons and presented to the church by Dr. Z. V. Parker, the following was accepted: "That the church let a contract to the lowest bidder, as soon as sufficient funds were in hand, to begin construction of the Educational Building". Of course the builder would be required to give a security bond.

June 7, 1939, the church mourned the death of Brother F. H. Whitty, a faithful member. Mr. B. F. Hagood was appointed to succeed Mr. Whitty as treasurer.

His first record was interesting:

| | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Income for June | \$469.91 |
| Expenditures for June | \$469.91 |

The January 10, 1940, conference reported on the church letter of the last quarter of 1939

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Baptisms | 12 |
| Letters | 5 |
| Lost by letters | 12 |
| Total Membership | 509 |

At this same conference, the pastor announced that the building funds of the educational building were now \$3,957.55

January 24, 1940, some changes were made regarding church announcements etc. It was voted that the treasurer's report be included in the bulletin; also all announcements were to appear in the bulletin and none were to be made during worship service except by the pastor.

January 24, 1940, in conference, the subject of the mission on Spring Street, started and carried on by Rev. and Mrs. K. D. Stukenbrok, was discussed. L. B. Daniel moved that the work be released by the church and perhaps the Tabernacle Church would take it over. The motion was carried.

Rev. R. L. Pugh presented a resolution that the church borrow an amount not to exceed \$10,000.00 to be used for the erection of the Educational Building, and that the church itself not be used in the lease or mortgage, but only the parsonage and ground at the back of the church be given as security. The motion was carried.

Upon the resignation of Mrs. H. L. (Virgie) Winfield as treasurer of the Building Fund, Mrs. W. J. Lucas was elected to succeed her.

At a special called conference April 24, 1940, seven bids were presented and read relative to the Educational Building, the lowest being \$16,074.00 plus \$1,450.00 building superintendents fee.

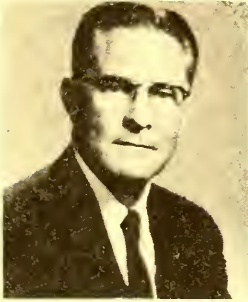
A special committee was appointed, consisting of Robert L. Pugh, B. F. Hagood, Rev. Thompson and Dr. Z. V. Parker. This committee was to consider, very carefully, and report later to the church.

On August 9, 1940, eight delegates were appointed to attend the meeting of the Atlantic Baptist Association meeting in Pollocksville.

Again, the church, as suggested by Dr. Z. V. Parker, agreed to have the by-laws read at the next conference. It is not done as frequently as in the old days.

For the first time in the history of the church, December 11, 1940, a committee was appointed to select a "Junior" Board of Deacons.

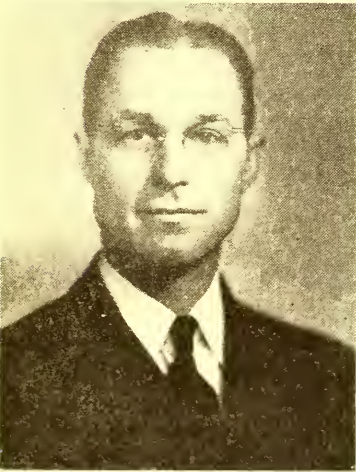
PASTORS



REV. R. A. THOMPSON
1936-1941



DR. THOMAS W. FRYER
1942-1949



REV. CHARLES E. PARKER
1949-1960



FRED A. MAUNEY
1960-1972

January 15, 1941, Mrs. Charles Hall reported that the Missionary Society had given \$125.00 for the Lottie Moon Offering, and \$39.00 for the 100,000 Club.

Twenty-two young men were appointed as junior deacons to serve for one year. Only four of them are in the church today; (1983). Two are active deacons.

In December, 1941, Louis Simmons, the sexton received a salary raise to \$9.00 per week. I remember him so well, and his wife, Lula, who was a wonderful public school teacher. Louis worked part-time for the Branch Bank also.

Rev. Thompson's resignation, which he had tendered verbally in November, was accepted and recorded December 17, 1941.

A pulpit committee of nine, six men and three women, was appointed.

We believe that Rev. Thompson and his family went to Cayce, S. C. from New Bern. We have seen him only once since his leaving our church. We shall always remember him as a very warm, dignified person, who was dedicated to his chosen profession.

July 19, 1942, W. B. Smith, Chairman of the Board of Deacons presided at the church conference which was called to hear the report of the pulpit committee, N. E. Mohn, chairman.

September 15, 1942, Rev. Thomas W. Fryer, of Dunn, N. C., was called to the pastorate which he was to serve seven years. Mr. Fryer's salary was fixed at \$3,640.00, and the parsonage.

Rev. Fryer's pastorate was certainly one of the most vibrant, colorful, busiest, and most productive during the long years of the church's history. He was popular in the city, the Association, and the state, as well as in the church. You who heard him at our Founder's Day Celebration, May 23, 1976, know that he was a dynamic preacher.

His wife Pauline, son Tommie and daughters Mary Ann (born here) and Laura Frances were important to the welfare of our church.

The church, in conference, September 9, 1942, voted unanimously to oppose the showing of motion pictures on Sunday in the local theaters.

One of Rev. Fryer's first duties was to impress upon the membership the importance of attending church business con-

ferences, stressing that it is a most important obligation of a Christian.

The second Sunday in November, 1942 was designated as "Rally Day" for the building fund.

At this period an "Emergency Hospital Ward Room" was designated. Miss Celia Singletary, provided "Black Out" shades for said room.

At this time the church was asked to approve a loan of \$800.00 to pay expenses of the repair recently done on the parsonage.

A committee of five persons was appointed to study any needs or improvements related to the work of the church in order that our spiritual ministry might be enhanced.

The nominating report was given December 9, 1942, for 1943. Among those elected were Doris Harker, organist, Naomi Wilson, assistant and Mrs. J. R. Carney, choir director.

We think that it is most commendable that our church served so well and accomplished the terrific building project during the war period.

In conference January 6, 1943, Robert Pugh gave his report as chairman of the Service Flag Committee. The committee had decided that instead of a Flag, a Bronze Plaque, with raised letters, of the names of men in the service of their country would be more appropriate.

Perhaps now would be the proper place to list the names of the young men, members of the First Baptist Church of New Bern, N.C., who served the United States of America so valiantly during the period of World War II.

It is with pride and appreciation for their service that we list them on these pages.

| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| E. K. Lovelace | C. H. Lovell | J. W. Huggins |
| J. B. Lovelace, Jr. | W. H. Willis | J. H. Sawyer, Jr. |
| L. M. Mitchell | Roy Blackley | E. L. Whorton |
| S. B. Mitchell | K. L. Guthrie | M. V. B. Davis |
| J. W. Mitchell | F. I. Harrell | E. M. Ballenger, Jr. |
| E. S. Mitchell | R. F. Rea | James Lucas |
| C. E. Ballenger | J. D. Fisher | Alex Mitchell |
| A. S. Hardison, Jr. | T. B. Coleman | M. M. Pierce |
| E. L. Himmelman | R. E. Sumrell | W. F. Dowdy, Jr. |
| L. E. Lancaster | S. L. Lucas | H. E. Russell |
| W. M. Mitchell | T. E. Peek | C. J. Ipock |
| R. W. Jenkins | H. V. Falls | T. B. Carraway |
| J. V. Jenkins, Jr. | L. H. Wade, Jr. | C. G. Sawyer |
| C. J. Williams, Jr. | J. N. Alford | |

January 6, 1943, was the second time we recall having any mention made of an annual church calendar. Rev. Fryer, and a group of officers and teachers, met at a luncheon and made plans for the calendar. As far as we know we have had such a calendar ever since that time. We find it a most helpful tool in carrying on our work.

The renovation work continued and from time to time, the up to date cost was announced. On this date it stood at \$6,100.00.

In conference of, February 3, 1943, a recommendation was made that Mr. Donald Smith be secured to direct the church choir at a salary of \$20.00 per month. Mr. Smith was a teacher in the music department of New Bern High School.

In the conference of May 6, 1943, Rev. Fryer talked at length concerning the progress of the new building, and the renovation of the sanctuary. There was a discussion concerning the question of buying new, or restoring old pews. (Sounds like 1983). Mr. Hall moved that the choice of pews be left to the discretion of the pastor and deacons. The motion was passed--end of pew discussion.

Mrs. Charles Hall announced during this conference that the Chaplain of U. S. Marine Corps Air Station at Cherry Point requested that the women of the church visit the marines as a part of their Mission Action program. The request was granted and plans were formulated by the W. M. U.

We have not mentioned heretofore, but during this period since Rev. Fryer's arrival, renovation and changes were made to the parsonage, costing the amount of \$2,400.00. Mr. Fryer was quite a builder! We recall that he had just completed a building program at the Dunn Baptist Church before coming to us.

June 10, 1943, the church engaged Mr. Frank Sproul, local CPA, to assist B. F. Hagood, church treasurer, in "setting up" a system of bookkeeping for the financial records of the church.

September 9, 1943, the deacons recommended to the church that the Baptistry be dedicated to the memory of our late faithful and good brother, W. J. Lucas. It was so ordered.

The church voted in conference November 11, 1943, that the deacons place flowers in the church Sunday, November 14, for the dedication service, in loving memory of four deacons who had gone to their heavenly reward, namely, Charles Lewis, Dr. Z. V. Parker, Roy J. Hart, and Fred H.

Whitty. These fine gentlemen and their great contribution to our church continue to be remembered by all of us who were privileged to have known them.

The Dedication Services for the newly renovated, First Baptist Church of New Bern were held Sunday, November 14, 1943.

The beautiful souvenir program included:

1. The Program at which time Governor J. M. Broughton gave the address.
2. An afternoon organ concert by Dr. Harry E. Cooper of Meredith College.
3. Several fine photographs.
4. The improvements, described as they had been done.
5. List of former pastors.
6. Resume of Rev. Fryer.
7. Church members in religious work through the years.
8. Church history by Gertrude Carraway.
9. Roll of service men in the war.
10. Interesting relics.
11. Educational leaders.
12. Eminent leaders of the early church.
13. Baptist leaders of recent years.
14. Presidents of Women's church groups.
15. Oldest surviving members.
16. Church Deacons.

Rather than try to describe the dedication program, we shall place clipping pages in this recording of the history, hoping that they will be printed just as they occurred.

SERVICES OF DEDICATION

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1943

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW BERN, N.C.

THE REV. THOMAS W. FRYER, PASTOR

•
"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the house of the Lord." - PSALMS 122:1
•

MORNING WORSHIP, ELEVEN O'CLOCK

Organ Prelude... "Priere" (Suite Gothique)----BOELLMAN

Gloria Patri (Congregation Standing)

Invocation (Congregation Standing)

Hymn No. 249... "Faith of Our Fathers"
(Congregation Standing)

Scripture reading: Matthew 16:13-20

Organ Interlude... "Chorale"----BACH

Prayer----THE REV. ROBERT L. PUGH

Chairman of the Church Board of Deacons

Announcements and Introduction of Dedication

Speaker----BY THE PASTOR

Hymn No. 244... "The Church's One Foundation"
(Congregation Standing)

Tithes and Offerings

Offertory... "Traume"----WAGNER

Anthem... "O Divine Redeemer"----CHARLES GOUNOD

MRS. RUFUS HARRIS, JR., Soloist
Dedication of Church-
Dedicatory Address-----THE HON. J. MELVILLE
BROUGHTON

Governor of North Carolina
Hymn No. 382...“Close To Thee” (Congregation Standing)
Benediction With Choral Response
Organ Postlude...“Fanfare”-----DUBOIS

DR. HARRY E. COOPER, of the Department of Music
of Meredith College, Raleigh, N. C., guest organist.

At 3:30 in the afternoon, Dr. Harry E. Cooper of the music department of Meredith College played a beautiful organ concert, and our own choir members sang the following numbers:

| | |
|---|---------------|
| “To Thee We Sing” | Choir |
| “I Sought The Lord” | Velma Stewart |
| “The Man Of Upright Life” | Male Chorus |
| “In Thee O Lord Have I Trusted” | |
| Paul Stewart, Velma Stewart, Donald Smith, Lee Cahoon | |

Our organist accompanied them on the organ.

There was an evening service with W. Cary Barker of Lynchburg, Virginia, delivering the sermon.

On the following two pages are listed the improvements, which will give you a complete look at the total renovation. After reading it, I am sure you will have great appreciation for the efforts of Rev. Fryer and the many members who served on committees.

NEW CHURCH BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS

At expenditure of approximately \$25,000, more than twice its original cost, The First Baptist Church has been extensively enlarged and renovated since April, 1943, with a new educational plant erected between the auditorium and the Sunday School building, making the church and its additions now rank as one of the largest and most modern religious units in this region.

The handsome, century-old church structure has been carefully preserved so far as the original front and side walls are concerned, but it is not at all as it used to be on the interior or at the rear. The entire edifice extends 180 feet in length and averages 60 feet in width, and contains a total of 17,490 square feet, of which almost two-thirds has been added within the past two years.

By adding twelve extra feet to the auditorium at the front, sixty more persons than formerly may now be seated there in

the new pews, to give a seating capacity of 450 for the main floor and balcony. The auditorium has been completely replastered, repanelled and redecorated. It is indirectly lighted by new lights.

Over the balcony in the front wall of the church is a beautiful new rose window of stained glass, 72 inches in diameter portraying the scene of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. Between the new plaster ceiling and walls is an attractive plaster of Paris cornice, 22 inches deep, fashioned interior. Four plaster of Paris pilasters, 22 feet high and 46 inches wide reach from the floor to the cornice, two on each side of the chancel.

A new pulpit, choir loft and baptistry have been constructed. The place for the pulpit is eight feet in depth and 28 feet in width. It has new furnishings. The choir space, 17 feet wide and 12½ feet deep, is back of the pulpit. Thirty or thirty-five persons can be seated there. The new organ console is located on the first row of the choir with the organ chamber at the top of the left side of the main auditorium.

Elevated behind the choir, the steel baptistry is visible behind its plate glass front when its curtains are drawn aside. Water for baptisms will rise behind this glass. At the rear is a large oil painting of the River Jordan, painted by G. E. Schlueter.

Doors lead into the church auditorium from the corridors between the church and the educational plant, and four doors placing the undivided, one-story Sunday School erected 40 years ago, this new two-story educational unit, 44 feet long and 65 feet wide, is one of the best-equipped structures for religious education in a wide area.

The first floor of the educational structure has nine rooms in the old space, and two new rooms have been added at the sides. The small new room on the north, 10 by 16 feet, is the pastor's study, and the similar space at the south is a Sunday School classroom.

A long room 32 feet by 15½ feet, on the southern side is a new Ladies' Parlor. Its architecture has a distinctive southern colonial motif, with outstanding panel design and wooden mantel. This room may be entered from the churchyard, with out having to pass through other parts of the church.

On the north side of the edifice is another large room similar to the Ladies' Parlor. This will be used by the Cradle Roll and Beginners; Departments of the Sunday School. Hallways on both sides of the educational building have special offices for

the Sunday School Secretary and rooms for the church library, church music and literature.

Over the Cradle Roll room is a large hall on the second floor for the Men's Bible Class. It will also be used for recreational purposes. Measuring 41 x 21 feet, it has been designed so that the acoustics will be exceptionally favorable for radio broadcasting. The ceiling is of celotex, and the side walls are plastered.

Radio equipment has already been installed there, with microphones and amplifiers available, as a downtown studio for New Bern's Radio Station WHIT. There the Rev. Robert L. Pugh, teacher of the Men's Bible Class, will broadcast his Sunday School lessons every Sunday morning, and there the Rev. Thomas W. Fryer, church pastor, will broadcast special sermons and programs. The men's class is one of the oldest and most outstanding in the State, organized a century ago.

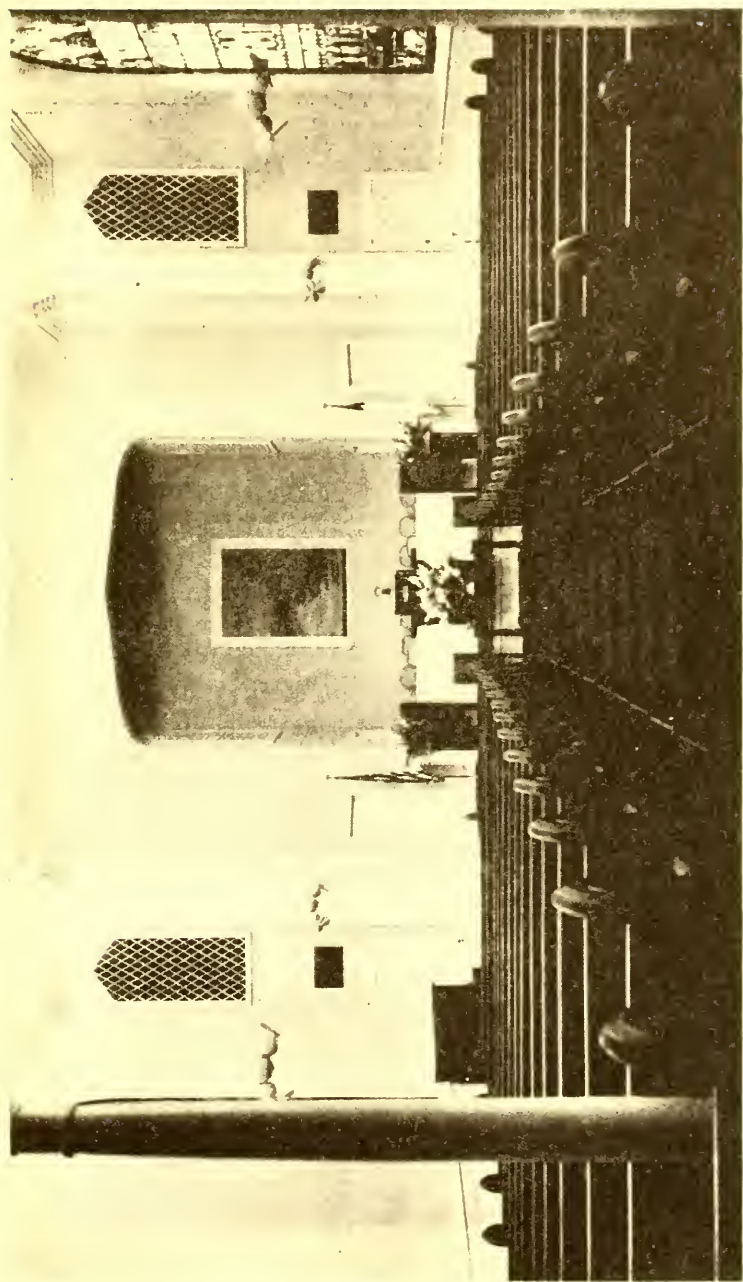
On the southern side of the educational building upstairs is a room 22 x 15 feet for the Senior Fidelis Class. Adjoining is a kitchen, 16 x 11½, with numerous wooden cabinets, double-drain sink, a large coffee urn, and commercial gas units for cooking. Storage space measures 7 x 16 feet in size. The organ chamber, 13½ by 16 feet, is another feature on the southern side of this floor. It is especially designed and arranged for its purpose.

A five-foot Colonial stairway connects the two floors of this educational plant, and wide new corridors lead from the second story to the Sunday School building in the rear. The first floors of the two structures are also connected.

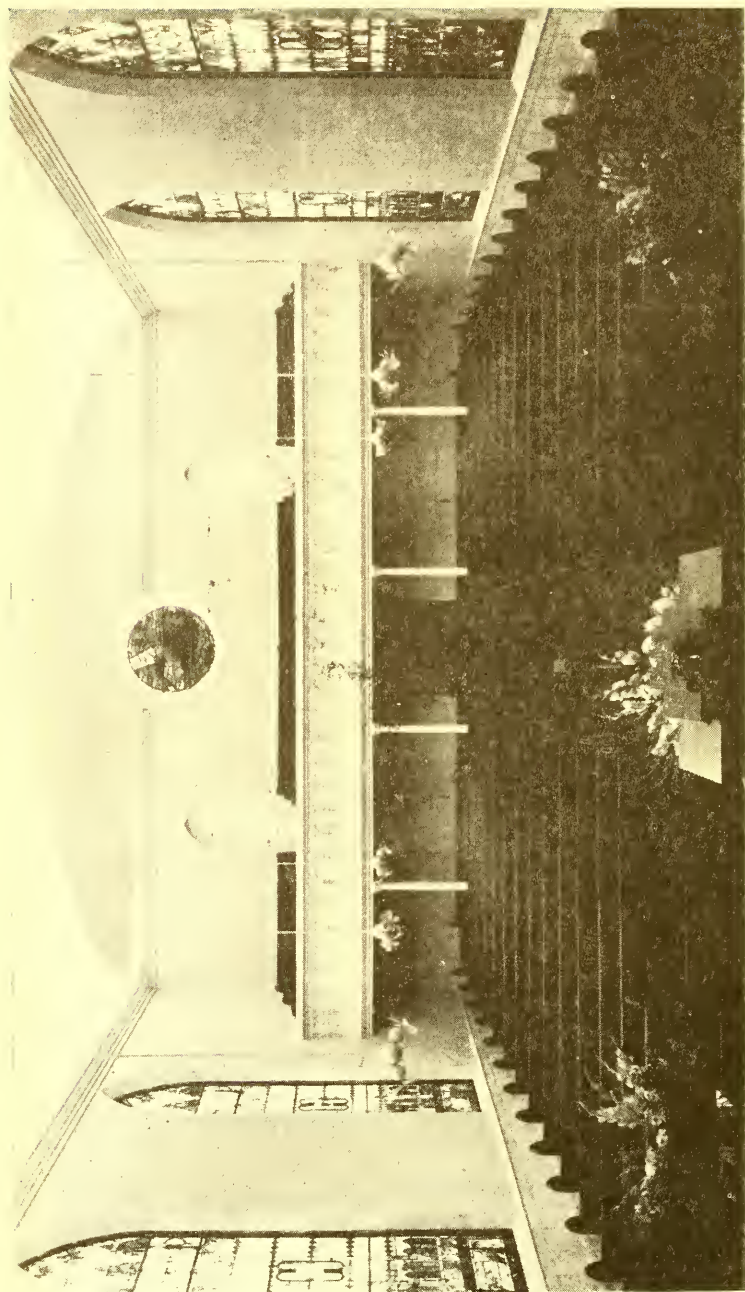
This brick building for the Sunday School, 51 feet long and 64 feet wide, with 24 classrooms and four assembly rooms, was completed in 1942 at a cost of \$15,000, exclusive of equipment.

Raymond Fuson, of New Bern, was the architect for all these new improvements being finished in the Fall of 1943. The Ernest Construction Company of Greenville, headed by L. M. Ernest, had charge of the construction work. On the church building committee were three deacons: A. L. Waters, chairman, J. B. Lovelace and J. F. Cuthrell.

The payroll averaged \$400 per week for six months, and as many as 23 employees were engaged in work on the church at some periods. The cornices and pilasters were made by Thomas Maye, negro, of Greenville, who has been in the



FRONT INTERIOR OF RENOVATED CHURCH, 1943



REAR INTERIOR AND ROSE WINDOW OF RENOVATED CHURCH, 1943

plastering business for 35 years.

The above is the most complete information we have had concerning any building or renovation during our many long years since the church was constructed in 1809.

The church met in conference January 8, 1944, and voted that the trustees borrow from New Bern Savings and Loan Association sufficient funds to retire the debt owed on the building program just completed.

The church learned with sorrow of the death of Dr. Oscar Haywood, pastor from 1930 to 1935. Proper resolutions of respect and sympathy were drawn with instructions that a copy be sent to Mrs. Haywood.

During the period preceding this time (date not available) Rev. S. E. Byler was employed as Educational Director and Associate pastor at a salary of \$2,080.00. We read that he was a very, very popular young man, and even though he was soon called to a field of greater service, he served our church well. His ordination service was held at our church before he left the city.

On April 5, 1945, the church received \$1,700.00 from the insurance carrier for damages suffered by a fire in the basement.

A motion was made and carried at this time that D. C. May Co. of Raleigh be awarded the contract to paint interior of the sanctuary and ladies parlor at a cost of \$1,700.00.

May 17, 1945, announcement was made that a Mothers' Day Offering of \$237.00 was sent to the Baptist Hospital.

At the same conference the finance committee was instructed to prepare a church budget to be presented before October. Two used pianos were authorized to be purchased for a total cost of \$150.00. Usually, in conferences, the financial reports are only mentioned as having been read and accepted. The one for September 29, 1945, is listed.

Here it is in part: 1945-1946

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Local Benevolences | \$200.00 |
| Missions | \$4,000.00 |
| Orphanage | \$1,000.00 |
| T. W. Fryer | \$4,500.00 |
| S. E. Byler | \$2,800.00 |
| Janitor | \$780.00 |
| N. Wilson, Organist | \$300.00 |
| D. Smith, Music Director | \$300.00 |
| Bldg. & Grounds | \$600.00 |
| Parsonage upkeep | \$250.00 |

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Insurance | \$160.00 |
| Travel | \$200.00 |
| Retirement | \$160.00 |
| Entertainment | \$300.00 |
| Music Supplies and etc. | \$125.00 |

The other entries are incidentals like telephone, fuel, etc. We thought it would be interesting to compare with todays budget figures.

The minutes mentioned a "Dedication Service" in September for which the free will offering did not pay the expenses. The type of service was not described.

The church authorized the purchase of a 125 service set of "dishes" hoping that the many extra plates ordered could be sold for \$5.00 as memorial plates to help defray the cost. The dishes we use today are the remainder of that purchase.

Rev. Byler wrote his letter of resignation November 14, 1945, having received a request from Dr. R. G. Lee of Memphis, Tennessee, to become associated with his ministry.

Rev. S. E. Byler was examined for his ordination by: Rev. Fryer, Rev. Hodges, Rev. C. H. Convort of Pollocksville, Mrs. C. H. Hall, and N. E. Mohn.

January 10, 1946, there was considerable discussion concerning an increase of Mr. Donald Smith's salary. It was tabled because of improper procedure.

Mr. Smith is remembered as an excellent music director. He required and received 100% respect and "no nonsense" participation in his music program.

March 28, 1946 the church voted the expenditure of approximately \$2,750.00 for the installation of a heating system for the parsonage, and any other work relative to the furnace.

At this period, May 1946, was the time we began our Mission Program in memory of our sons who served their country in World War II.

It had been the plan and the desire of the church, with the financial support of Mr. and Mrs. N. E. Mohn, to send and support a missionary to the European Theater, but upon investigation, that was not permitted at the time.

Therefore Mr. & Mrs. W. R. Medling were sent to Japan as missionaries from our church. The cost of \$2,000.00 annually was shared by the Mohns and the church. The program was continued for some few years and the Medlins visited us while on furlough in America.

REV. AND MRS. WILLIAM ROBERT MEDLIN
Missionaries To Japan



This husband and wife team was sent as missionaries to Japan in June 1946, where they served for several years.

During their foreign ministry, total support was provided by the First Baptist Church.

A more detailed account is found elsewhere in this history.

Rev. Medlin was born in Japan; his wife, Mary Louise, in Tenn.

When on furlough, they always visited the church.



When plans were being completed for the mission program to begin in June 1946, the Medlins came to our church for a Dedication Service for the program and to honor our young men who had lost their lives in combat during the war.

In June plans were formulated for the annual picnic, which was a wonderful all day affair usually in Morehead. Mr. Hall's tub of pink lemonade I shall always remember. It was something special!

Things were looking up! The proposed church budget for 1947 was increased to \$20,600.00. The pastor's salary was increased to \$4,700.00.

The church voted to borrow \$3,700.00 from the New Bern Savings and Loan, giving the parsonage as security. The reason for the loan was to retire outstanding bills.

Miss Lillian Humphrey of Rockingham, N. C., came to the church in April 1947 to consider the position of Educational and B. T. U. Director. She was later chosen for the position.

It was in July 1947, that our church adopted the "Unified Plan of Government" according to Mr. Daniel's minutes. We called it "The Unified Budget System". I remember well that some of our W. M. U. members objected to it.

Many of us remember how devastated we felt when we stood on the street in October 1947 when the roof of our church caught fire. The insurance carrier settled the claim, paying \$16,066.38. I recall that the carpet was ruined.

At this period in our history the deaf and dumb persons in our community were allowed the use of a Sunday School Room for their Sunday School to be conducted at the same time as our worship service.

In the summer of 1948, Rev. and Mrs. Fryer went on a good will tour of Europe on behalf of New Bern and the First Baptist Church. They visited Hungary, Switzerland and England, among other places. Funds which had been set aside for the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Memphis, Tennessee were used to help defray the expenses.

In May of 1948, a nursery was built at a cost of \$1,500.00, one additional classroom for \$150.00, accordion doors in the Men's Classroom for \$500.00.

At this time, the church also voted to support the Ministerial Association to the amount of \$50.00.

Sunday morning, September 26, 1948, the church held a memorial service for Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Newland and ac-

cepted the \$1,000.00 bequest which she had left to the church in her will.

At the invitation of Rev. Fryer, a personal friend, Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, attended the worship service of our church November 7, 1948.

Invitation was by card only. Mr. Truman and his party arrived by plane at Cherry Point and were driven to the city.

Mr. Fryer preached a wonderful sermon, which he is said to have prepared after 11:00 P.M. the night before.

Rev. Fryer welcomed the visitors in his usual manner, never mentioning the president.

The presidential party was seated on the third and fourth pews on the right side of the sanctuary. The President sang lustily from the Baptist Hymnal. Persons who sat near observed that none of the party was too liberal as the offering plates were passed.

The downtown streets were cordoned off. Police and FBI officers were everywhere! There were throngs of people, over 20,000 waiting to get a close-up view of Mr. Truman.

At the close of the service, Rev. and Mrs. Fryer accompanied the President to the Marine Corps Air Station to board his plane.

In the Saturday evening edition of the Sun Journal, one local church advertised their Sunday worship service, saying "President Truman will not worship with us, but God will be there!!!"

Rev. Fryer prayed a beautiful prayer, asking God's blessings on the President of the United States and our country.

In the December, 1948 conference, the church voted to pay the few expenses which were incurred in preparation for the President's visit, November 7, 1948. \$50.00 was set aside for the purpose.

There was a special church conference, May 6, 1949, called for the purpose of dealing with the resignation of our pastor, Rev. Fryer, who had received a call to the West End Baptist Church of Suffolk, Virginia.

Since leaving New Bern, Dr. Fryer has served two Virginia churches and others in South Carolina, and Florida. He and his wife Pauline are now retired and living in Florida. Their two daughters are married, and the son, Dr. Thomas W. Fryer, is a minister. He is also married.

Dr. Fryer was one of the most able men ever to lead our

church. His accomplishments during his pastorate here are unparalleled.

On the above date, a pulpit committee was appointed to select a new pastor to replace Dr. Fryer.

At the June, 1949, conferences, the church voted to increase the salary of Donald Smith, Music Director, to \$100.00 monthly, and to give him full authority to direct the music program as he wished.

Also the church voted to purchase cutlery with the \$97.19 left after the china cost was paid.



THOMAS MEREDITH,
Founder of the Biblical Recorder.
1819-1822
1834-1836

“A Time of Change”

The Rev. Charles E. Parker of Franklin, N. C. was called to the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, October 1, 1949. Mrs. Parker, her mother, Mrs. Cross, two daughters, Sara Elizabeth and Janet, and one son Charles (“Bud”, “Preacher”) resided in the historic parsonage on Johnson Street for almost eleven years as they served the church and the community.

Rev. Parker had served several pastorates in the state, and for six years was chaplain at the North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston Salem.

Mrs. Parker was a public school teacher, as were the daughters later.

He was for years a prominent educational figure in the denomination, serving as a trustee of Meredith College.

Rev. Parker assumed the pastorate at a salary of \$6,600.00 with additional benefits such as car expense and utilities.

During the Parker years many outstanding speakers were brought to the church. We shall mention them in more detail as the occasions which brought them begin to happen.

It is worthy of note that Rev. Parker had a good rapport with the many agencies within the State Convention, as well as the Association and the local church. He had great interest in the Woman’s Missionary Union in all phases of its work.

The Baptist State Convention met in special session in Charlotte April 27, 1950 to deal with the question of the offer of \$700,000.00 from the Federal Government to the Baptist Hospital of North Carolina.

As you recall, the Baptists of the state declined the offer, and instead, voted to raise the needed funds among the churches. Our church gave \$1,000.00 from our church balance of June 26, 1950. We also gave \$500.00 for our Mother’s Day Offering to the hospital.

Rev. Parker was always faithful in his attendance at

denominational meetings at every level. He attended the Baptist World Alliance in Cleveland, Ohio, July 19, 1950.

October 5, 1950, the church presented a love offering of \$350.00 to Rev. Parker in appreciation for his fine leadership.

A loan was secured from the Branch Bank at this time for \$5,601.79 to complete some much needed repairs.

For some years during this period, Scout Troops were sponsored by the church, and had their meeting in the Sunday School Department.

Our church from its beginning has always been mission minded. January, 1951, a thirty minute Sunday evening broadcast was begun over station WHIT, and was continued for quite some time. The financial support was supplied on a weekly basis.

Through Rev. Parker the North Carolina Evangelistic Conference was invited to meet with our church in February 1952, which it did.

We began overworking Mrs. Parker the minute she set foot in New Bern, and we've done it ever since to this day, July 15, 1983. Year after year after year, she was elected to be the principal of the Vacation Bible School. Every year there was a wonderful report of enrollment, attendance, participation and professions of faith, more than doubling any of our modern day reports.

As early as November, 1951, Mr. Parker planted the seed for our large educational plant which we enjoy today. He recognized the need in order that we might be prepared for our church growth.

Watch how little seeds grow!

In December, 1951, a committee was appointed to study the advisability of supporting a mission at Havelock. That was the birth of the Cherry Point Baptist Church, a vital growing church which is an important part of the Atlantic Baptist Association today.

In a church conference of January 10, 1952, 33 persons were received into our church through the mission. We voted to pay a supply minister for the mission \$40.00 weekly. Felix Moore was the Lay Minister until a pastor was secured. We continued to support the Cherry Point Mission until it became a church and was self-supporting.

At this time we purchased a baby grand piano from Mr.

J. T. Kennedy for \$400.00.

In 1952 we accomplished several things worthy of note.

From Stahl-Rider Co. of Raleigh we purchased a Carrier air conditioning unit for cooling the sanctuary at a cost of \$7,082.00. In May we purchased twenty four chairs for the Cherry Point Mission. September 11, 1952, upon the recommendation of the Deacons and the Brotherhood, the church voted to purchase 50 chairs for the Seminary at Wake Forest at a cost of \$500.00.

December 11, 1952, in conference, the church voted to give the following amounts:

\$500.00 to Cherry Point Church building fund.

\$500.00 to State Missions

\$500.00 to Southeastern Seminary at Wake Forest

At this period, early 1953, real estate transactions occurred dealing with the purchase and sale of lots in the Sunnyside area, which led eventually to the beginning of National Avenue Baptist Church.

In the conference of March 3, Mr. N. E. Mohn, Chairman of the Missions Committee moved that the National Avenue Baptist Mission be organized into a regular Missionary Baptist Church as soon as possible.

At a called conference on March 17, 1954, letters were granted to 56 members of our church that they might become charter members of the National Avenue Baptist Church of New Bern, North Carolina.

During the period 1953 - 1956, our church, through the efforts of Mr. & Mrs. W. L. Williams operated a teaching mission at Trent Court, a government housing project.

Let us not forget that our church experienced rapid growth and changes during the busy years of Rev. Parker's pastorate. We cherish the memory of him, and those years.

In 1953, during Rev. Parker's ministry, he led to Christ and baptised a little tow headed, nine year old boy who promises to be one of the great ministers of the denomination - - - he is Dr. Harry Robert Kahn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Griffin. He served his country four years in the U. S. Air Force.

Harry earned his degree from Campbell University in three years, graduating cum laude in 1973. He earned his master of Divinity degree from Southeastern Seminary in 1978. He studied at Luther Rice from 1979 until May 1981, when he was presented his Doctor of Ministry Degree.

Dr. Kahn was licensed July 1971 and ordained July 1973 by Bethesda Baptist Church in Durham. Rev. Carey Todd was the Ordination Minister.

He served as Associate Pastor of Edgecomb Baptist Church in Rocky Mount and for three years has been Pastor of Oakview Church, also in Rocky Mount. He has great promise as a minister of the Gospel. He has a fine family, his wife and three children.

It seems timely now to speak of another young man who began his religious training in our church. He is Rev. L. Guilford Daugherty, son of Mr. and Mrs. John P. Edwards of our church. Guilford was educated in the public schools, Campbell College, and Wake Forest, where he graduated in 1950. While at Wake Forest he preached in Durham.

That led him to Duke University, where he received his Master of Divinity Degree in 1954. He did graduate studies at Harvard for several summers.

During Rev. Parker's ministry Guilford was ordained to the gospel ministry February 12, 1950. Dr. Lovelace, one of Guilford's professors at Wake Forest, assisted Rev. Parker with the ordination service.

Mr. Daugherty served his country in the U. S. Navy after which he worked with the South Carolina State Convention.

He served two pastorates in North Carolina.

For some time Rev. Daugherty served both the North Carolina Symphony and the Oakland California Symphony in a promotional capacity.

He now works with the Foreign Mission Board, working out of Richmond, Virginia. His position entails much travel, but he is always in demand as a guest preacher when his work permits.

November 4, 1953, the church updated its insurance program, increasing the coverage to \$134,880.00 and dividing it among three carriers.

In December 1953, the Board of Deacons recommended that a building fund be set up and a goal of \$25,000.00 be designated.

On June 6, 1954, Stanley J. Britton was examined for ordination into the gospel ministry. Seven ministers and eight deacons were present for the service.

In conference July 9, 1954, the church voted, unanimously to send our pastor to the Baptist World Alliance meeting in

London, England, in 1955, bearing the expense of \$800.00 to \$1,000.00.

October 6, 1954, a memorial service was held for our beloved dead:

Mrs. Carrie Cole
Mrs. John Green
Mr. W. B. Smith, deacon

On December 8, 1954, the church went on record opposing the sale of wine and beer on Sunday. Resolutions to that effect were presented to the Board of Aldermen, City of New Bern.

Beginning April 8, 1955, Dr. William Ward Ayer, who for fourteen years was pastor of New York's great skyscraper Church, Calvary Baptist, conducted an outstanding revival for the church.

According to a poll taken, Dr. Ayer was declared New York's third most influential citizen, ranking next to Archbishop Spellman and Eleanor Roosevelt. Many New Bern citizens from other churches declared that they had never heard so great a preacher! Many declarations of faith were made during the revival services.

Interest was growing in the forthcoming building program. Contact has been made with Dr. Ernest Richardson relative to acquiring his property for our building.

April 4, 1956, the church voted in conference to employ an assistant to the pastor.

On July 4, 1956, Mr. Charles McEnally, promotion chairman, reported that the plans for the expansion had been approved by the deacons, and that a total report would be given to the church in conference, Sunday morning, July 22. The cost was estimated to be \$165,000.00 to \$175,000.00.

In August 1956 the subject of the establishment of an Eastern North Carolina Baptist Hospital was introduced by Robert L. Pugh.

Perhaps it would be proper to deal with the entire effort at this time and then return to other subjects contained in the minutes.

Mr. Joe Pearson of our church was appointed chairman of the Hospital committee for the Atlantic Baptist Association. Plans were to raise an amount of \$600,000.00 to build a Baptist Hospital in New Bern adequate to serve the eastern area.

To the sorrow of us all, the drive to raise the funds was not successful.

Kafer Hospital closed, and the Baptists of the Atlantic Association operated it for a period of time, our church as well as individuals contributing to the support. Again, the effort was not successful.

In September, 1956, Rev. Parker stressed the necessity of tithing in order that the building program could receive ample support.

Also in the same conference the church voted to freeze the Cooperative Program funds at the 1955-1956 level, for a period of two years, in order to receive more support for the expansion program.

June 5, 1957, planning began for the celebration of our Sesquicentennial in 1959. The committee appointed to work with Mr. Parker were: R. L. Pugh, C. W. McEnally, L. B. Daniel and A. V. Thomas. Sixteen others were appointed later. We shall refer to the plans for the celebration as they develop.

Once again, we started a mission. The Neuse Forest Mission began with the assistance of First Baptist Church. We contributed toward its' support monthly, at times giving an additional amount. The Mission became the Battleground Park Church, and is now known as the Neuse River Church. Mr. Harry Crump has served the church as pastor, and Rev. Parker preached there often during his retirement years in New Bern.

The church has been a struggling one, but we believe God has a great work in store for it to do; he has sustained it under trying circumstances.

In October, 1957, the church set up its midweek family program which continues today, affording much pleasure to those who participate.

On January 15, 1958, the trustees were instructed by the church to make the financial plans for the purchase of Dr. Ernest Richardson's lot adjacent to the church for the sum of \$30,000.00 (an abstract of the deed is herewith attached).

We think it necessary to include in the history the following fact, and we quote, "In the survey of the Richardson property, we learned that the Ward Building rests 1.09 feet on the Richardson (our) lot, and has been there almost a hundred years."

The Woman's Missionary Union of North Carolina met with our church for its annual convention March 11, 12, 13, 1958. This was the second time the sessions convened in New Bern,

the first being March 23-26, 1915, during the pastorate of Rev. L. B. Padgett. As we mentioned in the early account Mrs. Charles Hall (Mamie Berry) gave the address of welcome at both conventions. This time she spoke with the same vigor, dignity, and sincerity as she did when she was much, much, younger.

Mrs. George McCotter was the local president, and Mrs. W. K. McGee of Winston-Salem was state president.

All of the sessions were held in the Sudan Shrine Temple Auditorium because our church was too small to accomodate the crowds.

We shall list here, some of the very outstanding people who appeared on the program during the three day sessions:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mrs. McGee | Winston Salem |
| Dr. Margaret Applegarth | New York |
| Miss Miriam Robinson | Raleigh |
| Miss Barbara Redman | Raleigh |
| Dr. Courts Redford | Atlanta, Georgia |
| Miss Amelia Rappold | New Orleans |
| Miss Sophie Lammson | China |
| Mrs. Charles Whitten | Spain |
| Dr. Elmo Scoggen | Southeastern Seminary |
| Dr. Winston Crawley | The Orient |
| Mrs. Frank Linde | China |
| Miss Ernell Brooks | Africa |

There was a Carver School breakfast and a Meredith luncheon and a dinner of the Federation of Baptist Business Women. The meals were served at Centenary Methodist Church.

After the visitors had returned to their fields of service, many complimentary letters were received, thanking our church for the warm hospitality.

For the first time, New Bern participated in a city-wide Laymen's Revival which proved to be a most successful event. Rev. Parker had urged our support of the event.

On October 29, 1958, the building committee began meeting on a regular basis, organizing every phase of the planning. In February 1959, the trustees were authorized to execute a contract with Robert H. Stevens and A. B. Cardelli for architectural services in connection with the construction of the proposed Educational Building. The fee was not stated.

Preparations continued at this time for the revival scheduled in April; Mrs. McEnally was in charge of the visitation.

The Sesquicentennial Celebration began May 10-15, 1959.

The entire program was most outstanding. Rev. Parker had secured eloquent speakers from within and without the denomination.

Sunday morning and evening, Dr. Thomas W. Fryer and Rev. Raymond Thompson, both former pastors of the church delivered the sermons. Donald Smith was in charge of all music for the celebration.

On Monday evening, Mayor Robert L. Stallings welcomed the guests on behalf of the City of New Bern.

Dr. M. A. Huggins introduced Dr. Casper C. Warren, who spoke on "First Baptist Church's Contribution to Christian Education".

At the Tuesday evening service, Dr. Leroy Parker introduced the Honorable Brooks Hays, President of the Southern Baptist Convention who spoke on "First Baptist Church and World Missions".

Wednesday evening, J. Marse Grant introduced Dr. Louie Newton who addressed the group on "First Baptist Church's Contribution to Literature and Publications".

Thursday evening, Mr. Claude Gaddy introduced Dr. William Friday, President of the Consolidated University of North Carolina, who spoke on the subject, "First Baptist Church and Cultural Development in North Carolina".

Friday evening Dr. Bruce Whitaker introduced Dr. Chester Swor of Jackson, Mississippi, who has spoken at home and in many countries abroad in Youth Conferences. His address was entitled "Christian Youth - The Hope of the Future".

The membership of our church and visitors from many other churches and civic groups were privileged to have sat at the feet of these many great speakers during our days of celebration. The messages inspired us to go forward with zeal and determination as we serve and minister through our hallowed church which has been a beacon of light on downtown Middle Street and around the world.

Much credit was given to Robert Pugh, Rev. Parker and their committee of eighteen persons who made the plans and executed them so beautifully. At no time since this event has our church been privileged to entertain and enjoy so many guest speakers of such renown in the denomination. We look forward to future times in our church, as we strive to keep our early history alive and go forward in the years ahead in greater service to our Lord and Master.

In conference June 10, 1959, Rev. Crump reported on the progress being made by the Battle Ground Park Mission which now in 1983, we know as Neuse River Baptist Church.

July 8, 1959, in a business conference, the deacons recommended that the church borrow \$2,000.00 to finish some repairs which had been done at the church and on the parsonage. The trustees were instructed to secure such a loan.

In a called conference Sunday morning September 11, 1959 Mr. Charles McEnally recommended, as chairman of the finance committee, that the church accept the building plans for the educational building which would provide 16,000 square feet and bring the capacity of the plant to approximately 700 people. He also recommended that we have in hand cash amounting to one half of the total. There was serious discussion concerning the delay of beginning the work, so the church voted to proceed with the plans.

Again we feel led to publish in this history names which appeared frequently among the pages of minutes. We realize that the unsung heroes are many times the ones who deserve credit and do not receive it because they choose to work behind the scenes. They certainly will reap their reward from God Himself.

Our sincere apology if we have failed to list just one whose name should be here.

| | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------|---------|
| Thomas | Stokes | Meekins | Stone |
| McEnally | Fagan | Moore | Crump |
| Lewis | Ey | Hart | Sawyer |
| Parker | Munns | Ratledge | Fuller |
| Pearson | Flowers | Peevy | Grady |
| McCotter | Martin | Watson | Daniel |
| King | Lovell | Harrell | Huggins |
| Stainback | Rogers | Pugh | Smith |
| Powell | Carter | Russell | Edwards |
| Jenkins | Hammond | Askew | Adams |
| Williams | Harker | Anderson | Crowe |
| Edwards | Bizzell | Green | Lewis |
| Burnham | Reed | Holloway | Kennedy |

During the Parker years we always had a fine program of visitation. At the conference of October 7, 1959, a strong committee of four met with the pastor to plan the visitation for the first quarter of the year.

We have to remember Mrs. Parker and her dedication to visiting the sick, the shut-ins, and the new church people in our community. We recall that after she began teaching in the public schools again, Mr. Parker waited for her in the after-

noon and they went visiting together. She has practiced that good habit to this day, and we can say with assurance that she visits more people than any other church member, with the exception of our pastor.

At this period in our history, it appears that we budgeted a set amount for the cooperative program, rather than percentage giving as we had done for quite a few years. The 1959-60 budget listed \$10,000.00 for the program. This amount was displeasing to some of the female members who insisted that the amount be raised to \$12,000.00. A motion to that effect was made and carried.

In conference, January 6, 1960, upon recommendation of the deacons, the church voted to enlist the Sunday School in a fund raising effort for our educational building, citing the dire need of more space to be provided as quickly as possible. The church also voted to put the Sunday School offering in the Building Fund at this time.

Sunday morning, February 7, 1960, Rev. Parker resigned his pastorate, having been called to the First Baptist Church of Lincolnton, N. C. Losing the Parkers while we were just embarking upon a tremendous building program was a devastating blow. Too, we felt badly that the Parkers themselves would be denied the joy of seeing the task to its completion.

Mr. & Mrs. Parker remained in Lincolnton until his retirement in August 1967. They returned to New Bern, purchased a home and "settled in" with First Baptist and once again, becoming busy active members.

Rev. Parker suffered a massive heart attack from which he died, September 9, 1969. He was buried in New Bern Memorial Cemetery. Resolutions of love and respect were duly drawn by the church, with copies going to the Biblical Recorder, to his family and one was placed in the minutes of the church.

A library bookshelf was established to his memory at Southeastern Seminary.

Mrs. Parker, her daughters Sara Elizabeth and Janet, and their families live in New Bern and work actively in the church. The son Charles (Bud) lives in Washington, N. C.

Mrs. Parker is so highly revered that a Mission Prayer Group of the WMU has been named in her honor.

February 24, 1960, an interim pulpit committee with N. E. Mohn, Chairman, was appointed. Also appointed was a pulpit

committee to secure a pastor. Robert L. Pugh was chosen as chairman.

In the meanwhile much emphasis was placed upon the building program which Rev. Parker had led for many months.

On March 17, 1960, Dr. J. L. Carrick, a retired minister, became our interim pastor at a salary of \$100.00 weekly and housing facilities.

At this time Mr. Roy Fagan, a trustee, had passed away, and Mr. G. Russell Burnham was elected to succeed him.

On July 12, 1960, the pulpit committee recommended to the church that a pastoral call be extended to Rev. Fred A. Mauney of Forest City, N. C. at a salary of \$7,200.00 plus an additional amount of \$100.00 monthly for car expense and utilities. He accepted the call.

The Mauneys did not find our parsonage to be acceptable to their needs, so a housing committee was appointed to find suitable quarters for Mr. and Mrs. Mauney and their two sons; the price not to exceed \$90.00 monthly.

The pulpit committee was thanked and dismissed, and at the same time, the church voted to participate in the Southern Baptist Protection plan for our pastor at a cost of \$200.00 annually.

Seven persons were appointed to the parsonage committee with C. V. Rogers as chairman. These people were charged with the responsibility of disposing of the old property, and securing the new. We shall discuss this subject later.

In the November 9, 1960, conference, the church voted to rescind its prior action to require that we have in hand \$80,000.00 cash before beginning the new educational plant; instead we voted to require only \$40,000.00, and to plan means of raising that amount as soon as possible.

Sunday, December 18, was set as "Day of Dedication", when members would have an opportunity to state their plan for investing in the Building Program.

January 4, 1961, conference Mr. Mauney explained a forward program of church finance, a stewardship program for the entire church.

February 8, 1961, the trustees were authorized to borrow from New Bern Savings & Loan, the sum of \$20,000.00 for the purpose of purchasing a lot to build a new parsonage in Forest Hills.

March 8, 1961, the Johnson Street parsonage was sold for

\$11,000.00 but we realized only \$7,100.00 from the sale because there was lien on it. (We have to wonder how many times that property had been mortgaged.) The money was placed in a Pastorium Building Fund with the stipulation that we pay \$200.00 monthly on the parsonage note. The cost of building the parsonage was not to exceed \$28,000.00

During May of 1961, there was legal correspondence with county officials concerning the boudary line of the Ward/Richardson (church) property. Attorney L. T. Grantham assisted in defining the property line.

On July 12, 1961, in conference, the building committee recommended that the church accept the floor plan for the building, and that the Architect, Mr. R. H. Stephens be authorized and directed to proceed with drawings necessary for contract letting. A motion was made and carried to that effect.

This same day Dr. Ernest Richardson presented the church a check for \$200.00 for the Building Fund.

Now, let us discuss the "Forward Program" again. Robert L. Pugh was appointed the general chairman, with twelve persons to assist him. The program would begin September 17, and be completed November 5. There would be a loyalty dinner on November 2. Hopefully, the campaign would have stimulated interest in the financial program at this time.

A letter of thanks was sent to the trustees for their help in connection with planning and supervising the building of the parsonage. It was a beautiful "Preacher's House".

October 4, 1961, Mr. Mauney announced that Miss Henry Metts had presented certain items of historic value to the church. These items had been in her custody since the death of her sister, Tillie Lewis. Among the items was the tumbler musical instrument which is now in our Archives room.

In her will (1968) Miss Henry left to the church a bequest of \$1,000.00 given in memory of her sister, Mrs. C. S. Lewis, and Mr. Lewis. The money was to be used as needed, but she expressed the hope that it be used to preserve the archives of the church. The minutes of the time fail to record what disposition was made of the bequest. We think it was placed in the General Fund.

During this period, when we were building, Mr. Mauney encouraged members to tithe in order that our financial obligations might be met.

Mr. Mauney was a warm, caring pastor who had a good relationship with his people. He always seemed to sense the needs of his congregation even before they were expressed.

We note that as of January 17, 1962, we budgeted only 18% to the Cooperative Program, and 2% for Associational Missions.

In the church conference of March 6, 1962, the moderator announced that contracts had been signed for the construction of the Educational Building to the amount of \$182,465.00. Also, the trustees were authorized to borrow up to \$125,000.00 from New Bern Savings & Loan to finance the construction of the building.

The contracts were let to the following:

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|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| General | L. R. Thomas & Sons |
| Plumbing | Hinnant Plumbing & Heating |
| Heating & Airconditioning | Stallings Bros., Inc. |
| Electrical | Hammond Electrical Service |

December 12, 1962, Rev. Mauney presented a request from the Memorial Committee that the church approve the designation of one of the chapel windows as a memorial to Dr. Z. V. Parker, a dedicated layman of the church, and one to Miss Lessie Huggins, a dedicated laywoman. These two faithful members had served the church well in their lifetime. The request was granted.

The two remaining windows are memorials to Daniel Griffith Smaw, and Mrs. Mary Wingo Meredith.

The chapel was designated the "Albe Virgil Thomas Memorial Chapel" in his memory and the recreation room as the "Opal Waters MacSwain Recreation Room" in her memory.

Additional funds were raised toward the cost of these several memorials.

August 15, 1962, the church met in special conference to consider a new method of electing deacons. The method was presented and passed. Here it is in part:

1. In August a committee of five deacons be appointed to serve for the specific purpose of nominating deacons to replace those who will retire from the active board, and any existing unexpired terms.
2. Upon the completion of its work of screening and interviewing prospective nominees the committee shall bring the list to the entire deacon board for consideration not later than its September meeting.
3. After being approved by the select committee and active deacons the nominees shall be presented to the congregation for election not later than the September business meeting with the understanding that the list of nominees may be either amended or

approved by a majority vote of those present. Following this, a list of guiding principles for the committee on the selection of deacons was read. We believe this plan is in force today.

In conference March 6, 1963, the church authorized the borrowing of funds up to \$8,000.00 for the purchase of a new organ. On April 10, Mr. Mauney reported on the progress made toward the purchase of a new organ. At the same conference, J. K. Watson moved that the church purchase an old organ from the Memorial Baptist Church of Williamston, N. C. for \$250.00 to be used in rebuilding a new organ. The motion was carried.

In February, 1964, Mr. Mauney brought information on the organ to be installed in the church (The information is not listed in the minutes). May 6, 1964, Rev. Mauney reported that the balance due on the organ as of April 30 was \$3,000.00. So much for the organ.

Again in just twenty years time, we are having problems with the organ and rumblings that we need to replace the instrument now in use.

The organists in the years since we have recorded any information concerning the music program have been Naomi Wilson, Elizabeth Fuller, and Minnie Bell Wagemaker. Mrs. Fuller has served as director of music and organist several terms, and Mrs. Wagemaker has served as organist almost as many. Each of these fine women have been completely dedicated to the music ministry of the church.

Now, let us go back to 1963 and the new educational building.

At the conference of April 10, 1963, two committees were appointed. The first, to plan for the formal opening of the new educational plant, and the second, to determine the best use to be made of our present educational building.

The Dedicatory Service for the new educational building was held May 19, 1963, at 3:00 in the afternoon.

Recognitions were made after which the pastor and the people participated in the Dedicatory Services. It was a moving experience, and all of us felt the responsibility which is ours to make sure in the days and years to come that our fine facility is used for the purpose of maintaining a school of intelligent faith, and a teaching ministry as that of the Teacher of Galilee who, when he saw the multitudes, had compassion on them, opened his mouth and taught them!

After the prayer of dedication, the male quartet sang "God of Grace" after which the ribbons were cut.

We enjoyed the open house fellowship, and the Vesper Service, which followed at 5:00.

The Building Chairmen were:

Charles McEnally
G. R. Burnham
J. T. Kennedy

A. L. Waters
C. E. Baker

In May, Rev. Mauney announced that the church was interested in the purchase of good, used pianos for the new building and that the church at Dover and Battleground Park were receiving some of the furniture available from our old educational buildings.

The committee on the use of the old educational building gave a report describing the changes to be made in order that it become suitable for adult use. It was agreed, upon the recommendation of Mr. A. L. Waters, Chairman, that all work should be done on a "pay as you go" basis.

Policy was set regarding fees for the use of the building.

On January 8, 1964, the committee on renovations was authorized to proceed with plans for the pastor's study to the extent of \$700.00, which was in hand for the project.

April 15, 1964, Donald Smith, the director of music, resigned. He was recognized for the faithful, high quality service he had rendered to the church.

The committee charged with the replacement for Mr. Smith was authorized to proceed with interviews to secure a minister of music and youth director at a salary of \$6,500.00.

On June 10, 1964 a call was extended to Mr. Will K. Andress of W. Memphis, Arkansas to become Minister of Music and Youth Director, with emphasis on religious education. His salary was set at \$6,620.00. Mr. Andress came to the church highly qualified and recommended for the position.

October 7, 1964, in conference, the following recommendation of the deacons was adopted by a vote of the members present: "That the music committee, in conjunction with Mr. Mauney, the pastor, and the minister of music set up a complete program, including special offering for dedication services of the organ November 22, 1964.

The service was held Sunday November 22, 1964 at 5:00 in the afternoon. Mr. Gary R. Crow was guest organist, Mrs. Fuller, our organist.

Mr. J. K. Watson, chairman on the music committee, in the act of presentation said, "We present this organ to be dedicated to the Glory of God".

The pastor and the people participated in the Act of Dedication, the following portion of which we feel was the most meaningful:

"We dedicate this organ to the healing of life's discords, and the revealing of the hidden soul of harmony; to the lifting of the depressed and the comforting of the sorrowing; to the humbling of the heart before the eternal mysteries, and lifting of the soul to abiding beauty and joy, by the gospel of infinite love and good will".

The guest organist played a Dedication Recital in four parts, all of which were unbelievably soul stirring and entertaining.

The back page of the program listed the organ specifications.

The only item of special note in the conference of January 6, 1965, was a motion made and carried to the effect that in order to liquidate the balance due on the organ, the trustees be authorized to borrow \$1,500.00.

March 10, 1965, the Board of Deacons recommended that the committee on renovation of the old building proceed with making a library and kitchenette out of the small room next to the ladies parlor, with doorway being opened into ladies' parlor, but that no normal funds be used on the kitchenette. It was approved as presented.

During this period in the life of the church, the church conferences were merely routine, just with reports of the various organizations being given.

The conference of September 8, 1965, was concerned mainly with the nominating committee reports in the effort to secure officers for the new church year.

Mr. Will Andress, Minister of Music, was voted an increase of \$300.00 in his annual salary.

We have found through the years, as we have stated earlier in this history, that the First Baptist Church remained faithful in attendance to all denominational meetings as is evidenced by the appointments of delegates to the Baptist State Convention in the church conference of November 10, 1965.

It was on January 5, 1966, that the church voted to allow certain changes in the choir area as had been requested by the Music Committee through the Board of Deacons. A drawing of said changes is attached to the minutes of the above date.

It was also during this period that Rev. Mauney asked the W. M. U. to consider giving a religious program on Sunday afternoon at the Green Rest Home, which was the only such institution in the area at that time. Today, there are three rest homes and two skilled care facilities, with bed capacity of 400 to 500. The church ministers to all of them through the W. M. U.

In the period of the 60's much emphasis was placed upon the church program, involving the deacons. We note that on September 17 & 18, that the Deacons Banquet, Ordination and Installation Service was held with Dr. E. L. Spivey being present.

Through the years, it is noteworthy that our church was frequently used by some organization such as the Craven County Department of Welfare who used the Fellowship Hall twice within a period of a few months.

April 6, 1966, the choir was granted permission to sell their old choir robes, and procure new, all-season ones. The cost was to be defrayed by the sale of the old ones and designated gifts.

Mr. Will Andress, Minister of Music resigned May 11, 1966, effective July 1, 1966. He had accepted a position with the Talbot Baptist Church in Norfolk, Virginia. Mrs. Andrew Fuller was elected interim Music Director.

In June of 1966, Rev. Mauney presented a word picture depicting the condition of our Baptist Colleges in North Carolina as they strove to cope with rising student influx. He reminded us that Baptists were firm in the decision of not accepting federal funds.

Therefore, we had to support them. He asked that our church underwrite \$10,000.00 in the next three years.

August 10, 1966, the church adopted a set of "Guiding Principles on Use of Buildings and Facilities." This act had become necessary because of an increase in requests for use of the church building and other properties.

It was also at this time that the church council recommended the use of the Life and Work Curriculum for the Sunday School. The Mauneys preferred it.

In September 1966 Mr. Mauney, our pastor, brought the high lights of the financial program of the Atlantic Association. He stated that our church was doing well, that we had given better than 25% to missions in this associational year.

December 18, 1966, Mr. Morris Jordan was called to be our Minister of Music and Youth Director at a salary of \$6,928.00 per annum, plus \$400.00 for denominational retirement. One of Mr. Jordan's first responsibilities was planning a Youth Retreat at Salter Path and a youth trip to Ridgecrest.

August 9, 1967, Mrs. Andrew Fuller requested, and was granted, a leave of absence as organist. Mrs. Minnie Bell Bowers (Wagemaker) was hired to fill the vacancy.

It was at this time that a committee was selected to explore the possibility of expanding the church's mission effort into the western part of our city and to present recommendations for implementing same. This was the seed which was sown and grew into the Colony Baptist Church. We shall address the subject later in this history.

During this period, our Sunday morning worship service was broadcast over radio station WHIT.

At this time, August 1967, it was such a joy to welcome to our fellowship, our former pastor, Rev. Charles E. Parker, and Mrs. Parker who had retired from the First Baptist Church of Lincolnton. In the absence of our pastor, Rev. Parker preached at the morning worship hour September 10.

Our Associational Letter of October, 1967 revealed that our total receipts were \$81,428.00, a decrease of \$823.00 over 1966; however our cooperative program gifts showed an increase of \$1,661.00 over 1966.

During this period our church conducted Sunday School at the French Memorial Home; usually a deacon would teach the lesson. We recall that Mr. Russell Burnham and Mr. Douglas Ratledge often served. On our Communion Sunday Mr. Ratledge served Communion to the residents of the rest home.

Perhaps it would be of interest to take a total look at our gifts for 1967 - - -

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|------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1967 | Total Offerings | \$85,313.57 |
| 1967 | Budget Offerings | \$74,476.79 |
| 1967 | Budget Goal | \$79,739.00 |
| 1967 | Cooperative Program | \$16,290.18 |

Mr. Jordan, Minister of Music announced that there were 135 persons involved in the church choirs.

Mr. Charles Yohn reported that the average Sunday School attendance in 1967 was 307, and 1968, 286.

Mr. Jordan further announced the arrival of the new trumpet rank of pipes for the church organ, but Mr. White was unable

to say just when they could be installed.

In conference February 8, 1968, announcement was made that the salary of the Minister of Music would be raised by \$40.00 monthly, effective February 1. Mr. Jordon declined to accept it.

The Spring Revival Services were announced for March with Rev. Julian Hopkins leading us.

It was on April 14, 1968, that the church met in special called session on Sunday Morning for the purpose of the presentation of the proposed Constitution and By-Laws. Each family would receive a copy for study for the ensuing thirty day period, after which the document would be voted on by the church, in conference. During the period of study, there was much discussion, and some opposition to the document. However, on May 19, at the pre-announced conference, the constitution by laws were accepted by a vote of 135 for and 23 against.

At the same time the church voted to recommend that Brother James Leathers be accepted as a ministerial candidate at Southern Seminary.

August 7, 1968 plans were finalized for the procurement of a Pictorial Directory for the church. The discussion had been underway for a period of two months or more. It was decided that the church calendar should be included at an approximate cost to the church of \$250.00. The directory was to be compiled by the Church Pictorial Service of America.

We note during the middle period of the sixties that a slow decline of the Sunday School was happening; that decline has continued and worsened in recent times. The matter is of grave concern to the church. We have facilities sufficient for almost unlimited growth, adequate leaders and teachers. We realize that the total convention has realized some decline, but the sister Baptist Churches in our city, all smaller, have better enrollment and attendance records than we have. We have a highly qualified director who keeps abreast of all the up-to-date methods recommended by the Sunday School Board, so we continue to be most concerned.

We now continue with items of the August 7 conference. The deacons recommended that the work proposed by the Building and Grounds Committee be done, namely:

1. Complete the refinishing of the vestibule and front stairways of the church.
2. The back halls of the old educational building.

3. The partitioning of the old Junior Sunday School Assembly room for a church library.
4. Arrange old library for the presentation of the church archives.
5. Repair plaster in sanctuary.

They further recommended that the cost of the work not to exceed \$1,500.00. Imagine the cost of that much work this July 22, 1983!!

During this period the pastor, Rev. Mauney taught a class on "Leadership and Teaching Methods" which was of invaluable help to those members who participated.

The following excerpts from the Associational letter for our church for 1968 are interesting as well as informative:

1. There were 29 Baptisms.
2. 46 additions by letter and statement.
3. Lost 37 by death and transfer.
4. Resident membership 634
5. Total membership 1025
6. 185 tithers
7. 23% given to cooperative program.
8. 2% to associational missions.
9. W.M.U. enrolment 192
10. Sunday School enrollment 554.
11. Sunday School average attendance 294.
12. Training Union enrollment 144.
13. Training Union average attendance 84.
14. Music program enrollment 162.
15. Total financial gifts \$91,847.00
(Largest in history of the church)
16. Cooperative program gifts \$17,817.00
17. Associational Missions \$1,534.00.
18. State Missions, \$2,791.00.
Home & Foreign
19. Designated Missions \$1, 623.00.

It was at this time that the church council presented the proposals for a coordinated Wednesday evening program which would meet the church goals set forth at the beginning of the year. They are as follows: supper, 6:30, prayer service, and youth meetings with adjournment by 8:30. This plan continues today, and is a very effective church program.

The conference of November 6, 1968, heard the recommendation that the church Scholarship Fund be named the "Mamie Hall - Ida Sawyer Scholarship Fund" and be presented to Meredith College and be paid in increments of \$500.00 for use as deemed appropriate by the college. The motion was made and carried. These two great Christian women were certainly worthy of this honor to their memory.

We note in the records of January 8, 1969, that the church had exceeded the Lottie Moon Foreign Mission Goal of \$2,200.00, and looked forward to even better response to the Annie Armstrong Easter offering in March.

Rev. Mauney noted an item of concern to the church, namely: that a business very near New Bern High School had made application for a beer and wine license. The church went on record as opposing the permit, and local authorities were informed.

Plans for the establishment of the Long Range Planning Committee were formulated during January. Months of planning, meetings, study, plus the cost. continued for months. The final report of decisions were printed with a book being mailed to each church family. Nothing ever came of it, so we have no way of evaluating the time spent in compiling the report.

The financial report for the month, listed the mortgage balances as educational building \$63,663.00 and the parsonage \$3,829.00. The fifth Sunday offerings had been a great factor in the elimination of the parsonage debt.

February 6, 1969, the deacons recommended that the Building and Grounds Committee be authorized to proceed with the needed church and parsonage repairs, and that the church vote favorably on a \$10,000.00 loan for the purpose. It was so ordered.

The subject of a church-sponsored kindergarten was revived after having been tabled in 1966. We shall pursue the project later.

The music program was very active during this period. The graded choirs are all doing effective work, and with the aid of the W.M.U. a choir was organized at Trent Court.

A very worthy mission of the church was the sponsorship of the summer program of "Little League Baseball". The male adults who donated their time and efforts to the program are to be commended. It was great training for the boys involved.

The pre-school kindergarten ministry of the church was begun Sept. 1, 1969, under the direction of Mrs. Billy Edgerton.

The school was to be self sustaining with the exception of one half of the utility expense. There were several guidelines relating to the operation. These are listed in the minutes of the period. During the seasons in which the kindergarten operated, the director and the persons who were her assistants

maintained a strict Christian environment with emphasis on religious training, as well as public education at the preschool level.

August 24, 1969, Mr. Morris Jordon resigned as Music and Youth Director after having served two years and seven months. The resignation was accepted with regret. A motion was made to secure Mr. Julian Wagemaker's services on a temporary basis, and that Mrs. Kay Palmer, Mrs. Minnie Bell Bowers and Miss Mitzi Reece be chosen to assist him.

Mrs. Janis (Billy) Edgerton reported favorably on the operation of the pre-school ministry. There were 23 children enrolled and Mrs. Beth Wagner, and Mrs. Agnes Brock were fine assistants.

We were pleased that in January, 1970, Cooperative Program gifts were 24%, a 1% increase over the previous year.

In the January conference, Mrs. Ray Stainback, W.M.U. president, urged attention to Focus Week in February. During her tenure in office Mrs. Stainback continued to stress the importance of all the various mission organizations and our attendance to them.

During this period the youth program of the church was very active despite the fact that we were without a youth staff member. The church youth committee was to be commended.

April 22, 1970, upon the recommendation of J. K. Watson, Chairman of the Music Committee, twenty Broadman Hymnals not now in use were sent as a gift to Cherry Hospital in Goldsboro. Our W.M.U visitors to the hospital had noted the lack of hymnals.

In April Mr. Watson also announced to the church that a new grand piano had been given to the church and would arrive in the near future. A decision would be made relative to the disposition of the one already owned, which needed repairs at a cost of \$1,500.00.

Marse Grant, editor of the Biblical Recorder and author of a new book "Whiskey at the Wheel", spoke at the morning service, May 3, 1970.

The deacons recommended that copies of the book be placed in the hands of individuals and organizations who could use the information for public good. The motion was made and carried that the church participate at a cost of \$130.00.

Mr. Mauney announced that in the fall of 1969, the church had voted to authorize the State Baptist Convention to con-

duct an Interracial Conference in our church on April 28, 1970. He noted that the conference would be held Tuesday evening at 7:30, and that Dr. Henry Turlington of Chapel Hill and Dr. John Fleming of Shaw University would speak.

Rev. Mauney advised in May of 1970, that the radio broadcast had been free to us as a public service for several years, and that the radio station had also paid the cost of the telephone line. He felt that now the church should assume that charge. It was agreed.

Miss Carol Coyle, a religious worker who had been hired earlier for summer work at a salary of \$75.00, arrived on the field to begin her work with the youth, Sunday School, teacher training, and service to the elderly.

In July the church appointed five persons to serve on the Library-Archives committee. This committee would have authority to purchase books and to screen books which were donated to the library.

We, again, in August, 1970 renewed the subject of expansion with a view toward West New Bern. You recall that earlier we talked of a mission effort in that direction. The committee on "Future Expansion" chaired by Robert L. Pugh made their report, a portion of which we quote:

First: "That the church purchase seven acres of property made available in Colony Estates for a price not to exceed \$21,000.00."

Second: "That the finance committee be instructed to find and recommend ways and means of securing the required \$5,000.00 as a down payment on the property."

Third: "That the Trustees be authorized to enter into negotiations with the Weyerhaeuser Properties, Inc. to finance the balance due at the most reasonable rate available."

Fourth: "That we make application to the Department of State Missions for assistance in the sum of \$2,000.00 for the year 1971, with the understanding that we be permitted to file subsequent applications for the same amount in 1972, and again in 1973."

The matter was brought before the church in called conference Sunday morning, August 23, 1970, where it was duly presented and passed by a majority vote. Thus we were getting nearer to the establishment of Colony Baptist Church.

The final purchase price of the property was \$21,000.00, and state mission funds were contributed to the amount of \$5,400.00 over a three year period. More later!

In late August of 1970 it was discovered that the roof of the old Sunday School Building was in dire need of repair. Bids were received which the church thought to be excessive. Semi-permanent repair was decided upon at a cost of \$1,200.00.

At the September conference, Rev. Mauney reminded his

people that the Revival would begin October 4, under the leadership of Dr. Leo Green, and Rev. Homer McKeithan. We remember so vividly what a great time we had during those days. The high-light certainly was Dr. Green's early morning study on the book of Hosea. We who worked downtown stopped by on the way to our place of business. It was a most inspiring experience.

During this period of our history, we increased our mission gifts, budgeting 24% for the Cooperative Program and 2% to Associational Missions. This had remained in effect for some time. We were very pleased that in the proposed budget for 1973, we increased our gifts for these causes to 25% and 2.02%. Any church must increase mission gifts if it hopes to continue a vital, growing ministry. During the long years of Rev. Mauney's ministry, the church remained in a very healthy financial condition. The debts incurred in building were retired gradually as per obligation. The normal month to month expenses were paid as due. Special offerings were received on many occasions. We provided necessary funds for many youth retreats and other youth-related meetings. Expenses were borne, or shared for the pastor's attendance, at conferences and seminars.

Mr. Mauney always stressed tithing, reminding his members that we had really not given anything when we tithe; that much belongs to God, and any gift above that is an offering.

The W.M.U. and the other missions organizations were very active during these years. We regret that we are not doing nearly so well in the early eighty years. In the decade of the seventies we were blessed with very good leadership. Much attention was given to our work on the Associational and State level.

In the budget for 1971, an 8% increase across the board was allowed for all employees except the Sexton, Lisbon Baker, whose salary was fixed at the maximum allowable by Social Security laws and the Minister of Music who was listed at \$8,000, since this figure would require adjusting once we hired a person for this position. Also, the budget allocation for the Colony Estates property was included.

As the year 1970 was closed out, it was brought to our attention that in 1963 the church debt was \$145,000. It had fallen to less than \$50,000, and at the same time, missions gifts had been increased.

It was during this period that Craven Technical Institute used

our Fellowship Hall for their school building. The church was reimbursed for the cost. The Institute is now Craven Community College, a fine, growing institution of learning under the Presidency of Dr. Thurmon Brock. It is filling a tremendous need in the area.

In early 1971, a Lay Institute for Evangelism was held in the First Baptist Church at Morehead City. Several men from our church participated in the very profitable study.

During this period the W.M.U. was very active under the able direction of Mrs. Raymond Stainback, who was diligent in the promotion of all the organizations, particularly Baptist Women.

In February 1971, Reverend Mauney was granted permission by the deacons to attend a study on Pastoral Care at the John Umstead Hospital at Camp Butner. The study required attendance two and one-half days weekly for twelve weeks. The church agreed to assume \$200.00 of the total cost.

The W.M.U. announced that in order to provide further mission action, a class for pre-school children would be added to the Missions Friends Group.

Announcement was also made in the February conference, that the Baptist Men's Organization was doing well; that 45 attended the Men's Day Breakfast. They continue a worthy visiting program to newly arrived persons in the city.

In conference, March 10, 1971, the Treasurer reported that the total receipts for 1970 were \$97,046.09. Also, the deed to the Colony Estates property, dated March 2, 1971, had been received by the church.

The committee which had been approved by the deacons recommended that an area 220' x 220' in the western corner of the Colony property be cleared for use as a baseball field. This action was approved.

The W.M.U. had supported the organization of a Baptist Young Women's Group in October for women 18 to 29. Already, they were ministering to the elderly and to shut-ins; they are teaching illiterates to read and write, and were preparing for a mission vacation bible school for Holiday City.

The committee to secure an additional staff member reported little progress. They were informed by State Leaders that a Minister of Music and Education would require a salary of at least \$10,000 per annum.

In April 1971, the deacons recommended that the church

approve the purchase of a Multi-Peril Insurance policy covering an insurance valuation of \$567,000, rather than the coverage of \$388,609 which we had, the cost to be \$1,500. The insurance carrier would be Nationwide Insurance Company. The term would be three years on a fixed rate basis.

The following was a most encouraging announcement made in the April conference; Mrs. Stainback, W.M.U. Director, stated that the W.M.U. enrollment had increased from 139 members to 161 since last October.

In the June, 1971, conference the deacons recommended that the church purchase liability insurance applicable to the Colony Estates property to the amount of \$100,000.00 per person, \$300,000.00 per accident; limits, for three years at a cost of \$66.00.

Also, deacons recommended that the gift of a fence for Colony be accepted, and that same be installed at a cost of 48¢ per foot. Both recommendations were carried by vote of the church in session.

In the summer of 1971, Miss Millie Hale of the Chantilly Baptist Church of Charlotte, a trained nurse, was hired to work with the Associational Missionary in the Migrant Ministry Program.

At a special called conference in June, the church voted to extend a call to Mr. Charles B. Durant to become our Minister of Music and Youth at a base salary of \$9,200.00 per annum, with extras of insurance, retirement, automobile expense, and moving of his family and their household goods to New Bern. It was approved by a standing vote without opposition.

In July, Miss Beth McPhail announced her desire to prepare herself for full-time Christian service upon the receipt of a \$250.00 scholarship from Mt. Olive College. The college required a matching fund from her local church. The fund was disbursed through a designated amount to the church by Mr. W. L. McPhail, Jr.

In July, 1971, the W.M.U. reported several outstanding mission opportunities, among which was the opening of a Clothes Closet at the church through which the needy of the community could be served.

August found the church continuing to work on the Colony Estates property. Funds (designated) were expended during the month for clearing and other related work.

The report of a census underway in the Colony Estates - Holiday City area, did not reveal a great spirit of interest in a Mission effort. A few adults agreed to work in a Bible School. Two adults expressed a desire to sing in a choir. Further study of the Mission possibilities would be made.

Tents had been borrowed and a Vacation Bible School would be conducted at Colony with Mrs. Cyril Edwards leading.

Mr. Charles Durant assumed his responsibilities as Music and Youth Director on August 2. From the beginning he was a most effective, dedicated leader. His time in the First Baptist Church was fruitful. He was qualified for the task, and the church programs made much progress under his leadership.

In September 1971, observations were made concerning the Pre-School Ministry of the church which continues to operate very effectively in a self-sustaining manner. The recommendations of the committee were accepted by the church.

November, 1971, the churches of the city were invited to share in the Christmas Parade, which was to have a religious theme with floats being provided or sponsored by the churches. We agreed to participate. Mr. Durant would be in charge of planning the event.

Attached to the September minutes was a letter dated August 17, 1971 and signed by Robert L. Pugh. In the letter he commended our pastor, Reverend Mauney, for his timely assistance on the occasion of the very sudden death of Mr. Bradshaw, the ranking head of the local Employment Security Office. Mr. Bradshaw had been in the city only two days. He was found dead in bed. Mr. Mauney met his wife, who was enroute to join her husband here, and informed her of his passing. He ministered to the family as long as he was needed.

Mr. Mauney was a warm, compassionate man. He was a good pastor to his people. When there was a need, he was there, on the spot, helping to alleviate sorrow or suffering. He also shared our joys as he did our sorrows.

Following are some significant items which were contained in our Associational Letter of 1971:

- 58 Additions - 21 by baptism
- 20 Lost by letter and death
- 689 Resident members
- 377 Non-resident members
- \$102,943.00 Tithes and offerings
- \$5,762.00 Mission gifts

\$19,995.00 To Cooperative Program
\$1,703.00 To Associational Missions

In the December 1971 church conference, the financial report for the year was given. It had been a most productive year in all departments of the church.

The Finance Committee presented the budget for the year 1972: \$97,973.00, the largest in the history of the church. It was adopted at a special called conference.

We note that in January, 1972, the organ was tuned at a cost of \$60.00.

The Finance Committee reported on the financial status of the Pre-School Ministry:

Receipts - \$2,520.00
Expenses - \$2,205.00
Payroll Taxes - \$115.86

Mrs. Edgerton, the Director of the Pre-School, resigned as she was moving from the city. Mrs. M. L. Morgan, who was highly qualified, was elected to replace her. The school had an excellent record; school principals in the area state that our children go into the Public School System well prepared.

In March, 1972, an engineering study was begun for the heating and air conditioning of the Sanctuary and the old Sunday School Building, at a cost of \$2,000.00 with complete plans and specifications.

The church began a radio ministry in April, 1972, at a cost of \$50.00 monthly, the Sunday morning worship service was broadcast over Station WNWB. The church received many favorable comments from listeners.

During May and June, 1972, the youth groups of the church attended Youth Retreats at Camp Caroline.

Mrs. John Lane and Mrs. H. L. Winfield were elected messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in June.

At this time the church voted to purchase from Riverside Iron Works a steel roof system to be erected on a concrete slab floor at a cost of \$1,666.00. The Colony Estates Committee on Missions would decide where it should be placed, and also be responsible for roughing in water and sewerage.

At this point we should mention again the subject of heating and cooling for the Sanctuary and the old Sunday School Building. The church voted that the contracts should be limited to local firms. We also voted to postpone the work for a period

of time in view of the fact that the cost entailed would be \$50,000.00 or more; and that all consideration should be given to the Colony Estates project at this time.

During the June, 1972, conference, Pastor Mauney noted that the Biblical Recorder had listed our church as leading the Atlantic Association in gifts to the Cooperative program, and that we were among the 100 top churches in the State Convention.

Mr. Durant of the Music Department announced to the church that 18 young people would be attending the State Youth Conference at Camp Caswell in August. Mr. Durant continued to be an excellent Youth Leader, and many young people were receiving very fine training at his hands.

At the July 12, 1972, Conference, Reverend Mauney tendered his resignation as our pastor, to become effective the second Sunday in August. He had been called to the Elizabeth Baptist Church of Shelby, North Carolina. Mr. Mauney's pastorate was the longest in the history of the church, twelve years. Many accomplishments were made during his ministry to us. We completed a tremendous building project and laid the spiritual and physical foundation of a new church - colony. Through his efforts, we increased our financial gifts every year. He was a faithful shepherd to his flock, and we were saddened at his leaving. He and Mrs. Mauney continue their ministry to the Elizabeth Baptist Church where they went from New Bern. Their two sons have completed their education, and are filling places of responsibility in the business and professional world. We wish them well.

Seven members were appointed to the committee on securing an Interim Pastor. After a period of two months, the committee recommended that the church call retired minister, Rev. Aubrey Tomlinson, of Louisburg, N. C. Mr. and Mrs. Tomlinson came, and lived in the parsonage which we had sparsely furnished. He was a very dedicated, fine leader who meant much to us while we were without pastoral leadership.

The Music and Youth Director also was most helpful in the management of the affairs of the church while we were without a full time pastor.

We have said earlier in this history that we would not again list personalities except when one is involved in a particular project or effort of the church. We do this because all of us

now are living and working in the period which we are recording. Therefore, we all know each other and there is no need for recognition.

There is one exception. We could not close this book without having mentioned this individual who came to our church in 1938. He never preached a sermon! He never made a speech, he never sang a solo, but for forty-five years he has done everything else that one could mention. He gives his tithes, substantial offerings, and himself. The best way to describe this man is this --“If you want anything done, just ask Roy.” Roy Dixon and his faithful wife, Chris, have been an integral part of our church life since they left Oriental Baptist Church in 1938. Chris was reared in our church, moving her letter to Oriental when she married Roy. Roy’s mother lived an active life until she reached the century mark; she died at 102. So, we expect this consecrated couple to live and continue to serve among us for years to come. We give thanks for their Christian ministry and witness.

Reverend Tomlinson began his interim ministry at a salary of \$100.00 weekly with a car allowance of \$60.00 and utility allowance of \$50.00 monthly.

After Rev. and Mrs. Mauney had left the city, the church voted to send them a gift of \$500.00 with which to purchase an item of furniture which they desired, \$409.00 of the amount was designated gift.

At this time a Pulpit Committee was chosen to secure a Pastor. Mr. Henry J. Butler was Chairman with R. L. Pugh, Mrs. C. E. Parker, Mrs. W. L. Whitley and Dr. M. R. Chitty serving with him.

In September 1972, Miss Beth McPhail was certified by the church as a religious education student with the certificate being submitted to Mars Hill College.

The church continues to expend effort, time and funds on the Colony Estates property.

Reverend Tomlinson announced that we would have a Family Life Conference in late September. He urged our attendance to it, saying that it could be a genuine revival for our people in the light of improving family relationships. In the church conference following the Family Life Conference, Rev. Tomlinson announced that it had been a great success.

The Moderator, at the October church conference, noted

certain items reported in the annual church letter to Association:

| | |
|--------------|---------------------------|
| 642 | Resident Members |
| 414 | Non-resident Members |
| 511 | Sunday School Enrollment |
| \$120,710.00 | Total Offerings and Gifts |
| \$34,468 | Missions |

Mr. Durant, Minister of Music and Youth, announced that the Atlantic Association was attempting to organize a world missions conference to be held February 17-22, 1974. This would include a School of missions, and a missionary would be assigned to each church for a week's duration. The church voted to participate. It was profitable!

In conference November 29, 1972, the church voted to adopt the 1973 budget as amended in the special called conference of November 26, when the organist's salary was changed to \$1,500.00

We were pleased that the Cooperative Program was raised from 24% to 25%. Any increase in our missions gifts is a forward step in our stewardship responsibility.

During Mr. Durant's music ministry to our church he brought several outstanding vocal groups for our entertainment and pleasure. One was the Harper College Choral who presented their service of sacred music on April 15, 1973.

It was at this time that the Hand Bell Choir was organized. A \$1,000.00 designated gift was used to purchase a set of hand bells. Since that time we have had student and adult choirs which have participated in competition across the state.

In early 1973, upon the recommendation of the Youth Director and the Youth Committee, the church began receiving funds for an activity bus. We talked about it at every church conference, and finally it became a reality. We shall address the subject at greater length later.

It has been a long time since we mentioned the ministry to the deaf. You will recall that much earlier a group of deaf people used a space in our Sunday School Department for their worship. Through the dedicated efforts of Robert King, Jr., this ministry continues to this day. We now have only two silent people in our church but Mr. King interprets the worship services on Sunday as well as the prayer time on Wednesday evenings. It is certainly a wonderful service which he renders in the Master's name.

It was observed in early 1973 that the church had fewer visitors at this time than at any time in recent years. It behooves the membership to be more diligent in their efforts to contact and enlist unchurched and/or visitors in our area.

Our church hosted a Sunday School Evangelistic Conference February 15, which was well attended and hopefully would be of great benefit to the entire Association.

The Pulpit Committee reported progress on their search for a Pastor. They hoped to make some announcement soon.

In March the church voted to defray the approximate cost of \$500.00 to have Mr. H. C. Bass survey the church structure to determine its condition.

Reverend and Mrs. Kenneth B. Bryan of Petersburg, Virginia, were invited to visit in New Bern, March 23 and 24, to look at the church plant, and the city, with a view toward accepting the pastorate of First Baptist Church. They visited and were entertained by the committee. They visited again on May 2, at which time Rev. Bryan was extended a call to our church which he accepted.

At this time Radio Station WSFL had changed ownership and they no longer wished to broadcast worship services concurrently with the service on Sunday morning; therefore, the agreement was terminated.

At this time announcement was made that we had received \$700.00 toward our Annie Armstrong goal of \$2,750.00. Mr. Durant felt confident that according to our willingness to give in the past, we would reach our goal with no difficulty. He noted that our Lottie Moon goal had been \$3,600.00 and we gave \$3,900.00.

The Moderator also brought to our attention the fact that we now owed less than \$10,000.00 on our educational building. Reverend Kenneth Bryan, his wife, Lucille, and sons, Mike, and twins, Dave and Ken, arrived in New Bern on June 13, 1973, to assume the pastorate of Historic First Baptist Church. His salary is not listed at the time, but we quote from the budget which was prepared in November-December:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Salary | \$11,600.00 |
| Convention Allowance | \$500.00 |
| Denominational Retirement | \$1,000.00 |
| Car Expense | \$1,3000.00 |
| Utilities | \$600.00 |

Since Mr. Bryan earned his Doctorate while he was our

pastor, hereafter, we shall refer to him as Doctor Bryan. He was and is a warm, friendly, winsome, very dignified and intelligent individual and certainly he is a theologian of note.

Doctor Bryan's first official duty upon his arrival was to conduct the funeral service for Mr. N. E. Mohn, long time church leader, on June 15. We have always regretted that Mr. Mohn could not have lived to know Doctor Bryan; he would have liked him.

When Doctor Bryan began his ministry with us, there were definitely two factions in the church: one "going" and one "staying". We never discussed the matter with him, but we have to wonder if he would have accepted the call had he known. A man of his caliber deserved better.

As we continue this recording the church division will unfold.

In the summer season the church supported the Little League Baseball Program; also, plans were being made for the fall opening of the Pre-School Ministry.

At this time the Building and Grounds Committee met with Doctor and Mrs. Bryan concerning some necessary redecorating for the parsonage such as painting, draperies, carpeting and some tile repairs.

Also, at this time the church sold the items of furniture which had been purchased for Rev. and Mrs. Tomlinson. The amount realized from the sale was used to purchase a new refrigerator for the parsonage.

In May 1973 the church voted to make some changes in the constitution which would allow women to serve as deacons. The motion was passed 29 to 13, with several abstentions. This vote speaks for itself! Reverend Tomlinson stated that in the New Testament women were recognized as deacons.

Up to this time there were two schools of thought concerning the service of women as deacons. One of the foremost ministers of the denomination, the pastor of a very large Southern Baptist Church, opposed it, and his church has only men as deacons. He says it is not scriptural; we shall certainly leave the decision to the individual church.

In July 1973 several Girls Auxiliary members attended a camping session for G. A.'s at Camp Mundo Vista. A day camp was also held locally. This was an active time for our organizations due to the efforts of Mr. Durant, Youth Direc-

tor, and Mrs. R. A. Stainback, W. M. U. Director. The Mission Groups provided toilet camper kits for under-privileged campers, which we continue to do at this time.

In June the church, through Mr. Durant, extended an invitation to the Rolesville Baptist Church to present their High School Choir in Religious Concert, Sunday evening, July 8. They accepted, came, and were greatly enjoyed by those who heard them.

The church was saddened when Mr. Charles Durant, Minister of Music and Youth, resigned effective July 15, 1973. His resignation dealt a blow to the church program; he had been a most effective leader during his two years of ministry to the church.

A committee was immediately appointed to begin the search for a new staff member to replace Mr. Durant.

In July 1973, Mr. Sanford Catlett was licensed by the church to preach the gospel.

For the first time in history, August 15, 1973, women were elected to serve as deacons of the church. Mrs. Charles E. (Elizabeth) Parker and Mrs. Robert (Bee) King, Jr., were chosen to serve for a three year term, beginning October 1, 1973. Since that time, two additional women have been elected to serve: Miss Jane Marshall Jenkins, and Mrs. J. Ben (Virginia) Warren. They rotate just as the men do. The dedication of these women to the ministry of the church is commendable.

In November two buses carried members to Raleigh to attend the Billy Graham Crusade. Expenses were paid by designated gifts for the purpose.

The pastor reported on the meeting of the Baptist State convention. He noted the outcome of the discussion concerning baptism. The proposed amendment to withdraw fellowship of churches who do not require baptism of converts from other denominations was defeated 1,300 to 1,200.

During the December 1973 conference the Moderator observed that the church had truly prospered during the year; that we should be debt-free during 1974. As of the present date, the loan on the new Educational Building has been retired, just ten and a half years since the mortgage was made. Certainly, it was a commendable effort.

In the Stewardship Program for 1974, missions were

budgeted the same as last year; 25% for the Cooperative Program, and 2.02% for Associational Missions. Increases were allowed for staff and employees.

Our church has probably had more surveys than any church in the convention. Many, many times we have spent money for a survey of one kind or another. In most instances, nothing comes of them. In March 1974, such an effort was to be done by Jack Clark of the State Convention, and Roland Smith of the Southern Baptist Convention to help the church determine what the building and program needs were for the future!

At this time the question of relocation of the church surfaced again. You will recall that this is the second time in our history that the question has arisen, the first time is recorded earlier in the writing of these historical facts.

The committee which had been appointed to evaluate the situation prepared and submitted to the membership for study a long list of pros and cons relative to the question. The document was concise and well done.

The church, meeting in conference February 13, 1974, voted to raise Doctor Bryan's salary to \$12,000.00 plus the aforementioned benefits to become effective immediately. Motion was also carried that the trustees borrow from First Citizens Bank and Trust Company an amount sufficient to pay S. B. Parker Company for a new furnace for the Sanctuary; the amount probably, \$4,000.00.

In the same conference, the committee on the Pre-School Ministry announced the closing of the school at the end of the school year. Recently, the problems were too great to continue operation.

The deacons proposed that as of January 1, 1975, the church would change the offering envelope system to a mailing system in which the Duplex Envelope would be mailed to the members on a monthly basis for a set fee of \$57.00 monthly. We recall that the change was made. It evidently was not effective. It did not continue.

An Ordination Service for Mr. Sanford Catlett was conducted by Doctor Bryan in March 1974. He had been examined by a Committee of Ministers led by Rev. George Johnson who found him worthy in all four areas to practice the Gospel Ministry.

In April of 1974, the church voted to purchase from Branches, Incorporated, several air conditioning units to be used

in areas of the church where needed. The purchase had been bid by three local firms with the low bid being submitted by Branch's as above stated.

At the same time, the church voted to allow and amount up to \$500.00 for the Founders' Day celebration.

The First Baptist Church celebrated its 165th year on May 5, 1974 with Doctor Bryan delivering the morning sermon. Greetings were brought from the churches of the Atlantic Association by Rev. H. A. Privette and from the city of New Bern by Mayor Charles Kimbrell. A delicious luncheon was enjoyed by the members and their guests, after which a tableau of the history of First Church of New Bern was given under the direction of Miss Jane M. Jenkins, Mrs. Charles E. Parker and Mrs. Pat Jones. Rev. Robert L. Pugh gave the afternoon message.

The history of the church was compiled by Mrs. Robert King, Jr., Mrs. L. B. Daniel, and Mrs. Sam T. Cook. Mr. J. K. Watson sang "He Shall Feed His Flock".

June 1974, Mrs. John Lane, Mrs. H. L. Winfield and Mrs. Ruth Parkerson attended the Southern Baptist Convention which met in Dallas, Texas. They were official messengers of the church.

Miss Gloria Kimball was employed by the church as Minister of Youth and Education for the summer months at a monthly salary of \$500.00.

During the month of May 1974 there was much being said and done relative to the question of whether the church should remain in the present location, or sell the property and relocate, probably on the Colony estates acreage. Deciding the method of voting provoked much discussion, some heated!

The day of decision came June 16, 1974. Would that the attendance was that good every Lord's Day! The Moderator, Mr. W. K. Russell presided at the called conference. There were in excess of 350 persons present. The question of relocation was presented. The standing vote was: voting to retain the church in the present location, 271, voting to relocate the church, 91.

So, for a second time in its illustrious history, the people of the church had spoken! The question was laid to rest probably for all time to come. To the people who were born and bred here, to the families whose ancestors were born and died here, the spot is hallowed ground, and disposing of it, and

its ministry would be like a sword thrust into one's heart.

The people who come for a short time and then move on are vital to the life and well being of the church, but certainly they could not have the same regard for it as the members who are born here, or those who come to stay. We give thanks for both and pray God's continued blessings on us all as we work together for a common cause.

July 17, 1974, Mr. Seth Needham presented a statement and a motion concerning the establishment of a Mission on the Colony estates property. The motion was passed, and the church promised support to the effort in every way possible.

Twenty-seven persons signed the petition to begin the Mission. Seven of those persons have since left Colony and returned to First Baptist. Other persons left our church when the Colony Mission was constituted into a church. We lost a total of about 75 persons, we believe.

With all the involvement with the question of moving and starting a mission, we hear nothing about receiving any members upon profession of faith. Certainly there were some.

In early June 1974, Dr. J. B. Warren, Mr. J. T. Kennedy, and Mr. Sam Branch obtained an option on the parking lot behind the church which borders on Hancock and Pollock Streets. That was the beginning of many negotiations relative to the purchase of that lot and the one adjacent to the church which borders on Pollock Street. We believe it would be better to deal with these purchases generally since the transactions contain so much legal jargon.

The larger lot was purchased in June from First Citizens Bank and Trust Company for \$65,000.00. The smaller one, in September from Wachovia Bank and Trust Company for \$45,000.00. One mortgage has been retired, and today, August 1, 1983, the loan balance of the other is \$33,601.25.

In November 1974, the Trustees were granted permission to operate the parking lot, which was formerly leased to McLaren Parking Company of Raleigh. Roy Dixon was appointed to be in charge of the lot, a position which he continues to hold today.

For a period of time the lot was very profitable, but after the opening of Twin Rivers Shopping Mall, down-town parking was not in great demand. Three church members were hired to man the lot. The income pays the salaries with a balance

left each month. Church members are allowed the use of the lot any time they are on church business. Other times during week day shopping hours, they pay just as the general public does. Evening hours and weekends, parking is free.

Sometime in the perhaps distant future, the church hopes to obtain the two remaining properties on the square. The price of one at this time is prohibitive; the other, unavailable at any price.

In August 1974, the church voted in conference, to continue the Fifth Sunday Designated Offerings, and begin a Renovation Fund. These monies had formerly been used to apply on the Colony estates Loan. This designated offering was to be placed in a special account known as "the Renovation Fund."

Mr. Richard Spera who had been hired as Minister of Education and Youth requested that a portion of his salary be designated as housing allowance and utility allowance. Hereafter it was listed:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Remuneration for Services | \$200.00 |
| Monthly Salary | \$633.33 |

The Sunday evening following the arrival of Mr. Spera, his wife and son, a reception was given in their honor in the Fellowship Hall. Miss Gloria Kimball, who had worked with the youth during the summer was also honored.

The Sunday evening worship service for August 25, 1974, was cancelled in order that everyone could attend the Ecumenical Commemorative Services to be held at Tryon Palace at the close of the Bicentennial Celebration.

At this time in August, a Missions Committee was appointed at our church to work closely with the Missions Committee of Colony Baptist Mission.

Also, in August, the church elected a committee of 15 persons to serve on the "Building and Planning Committee" with Mr. J. R. (Bud) Garver serving as chairman. Nine of the original committee continue to serve at this time with new ones having been elected to fill the vacancies. Mr. Garver has been an excellent chairman, a position he continues to hold today.

For the year 1975, Mrs. Charles Parker was elected to serve as W.M.U. Director, and Mrs. R. A. Stainback, President of Baptist Women. The year proved to be a very profitable one for the organizations. A group of Baptist Women assisted the

Harkers Island Baptist Church to conduct a Vacation Bible School. Early in the autumn, a group of Baptist Women attended a Weekend Prayer Retreat at Mundo Vista led by Miss Martha Frank, a retired Foreign Missionary.

There was an increase in the enrollment of some of the organizations, and participation was improved.

September 11, 1974, the church approved the recommendation of the deacons that a letter be written to Colony Baptist Mission, stating that at such time as Colony Estates Baptist Mission be constituted as a church, that title to the Colony Estates property will be transferred to the Colony Baptist Church! It was so ordered.

In addition, it was moved that First Baptist Church join Colony Baptist Church in petition to Atlantic Baptist Association for admission and recognition as a sister church.

Colony Mission would also be invited to hold the Church Constituting Service with the First Baptist Church October 6, 1974. All of these recommendations were approved by a voice vote. Letters were granted to those members desiring to join the Colony Church as charter members.

Messengers were elected to represent the church at the annual associational meeting in October and the Baptist State Convention. Mr. Spera and Dr. Bryan were certified along with other members.

In conference December 8, 1974, the church passed a resolution to immediately purchase an activity bus, using designated funds for the purchase. The purchase was completed in early 1975. The bus fund of \$1,985.00 was withdrawn with \$1,300.00 being paid for the bus with the remainder being used for taxes, license, insurance and the cost of having it brought to New Bern.

In October 1974, Mr. John Thomas of L. R. Thomas and Son was retained to survey and examine the exterior of the sanctuary and the steeple, and to provide recommendations concerning the needs of same. A thorough and very time consuming survey was made. During the survey, Mr. Garver, the chairman of the committee spent much time with Mr. Thomas. During the entire restoration period Mr. Garver continued to spend much time "on the spot." At all times he was aware of exactly what was being done, why and how. Dr. Bryan was also very supportive. Later in this history we shall discuss

the Restoration in more detail.

In October 1974, Mr. and Mrs. Gelvin, organist and choir director resigned after having served a short period of time. Mr. Julian Wagemaker replaced the choir director, and Mrs. Andrew Fuller, the organist, each at a salary of \$150.00 per month.

At the November conference the 1975 budget was discussed. There is not a copy with minutes of the month, therefore we do not have the total amount. Mr. Branch noted that the overall budget had been reduced 8.1% below the 1974 budget, and then increased 5% as a challenge increase. Missions percentages remained the same. All staff member salaries were increased 5% with the exception of Mr. Spera, Minister of Education, who had come to the church during the year.

January 15, at the regular conference, announcement was made that the Lottie Moon Offering received to date amounted to \$3,122.71 and the December Sanctuary Renovation Fund received was \$1,085.30. All renovation funds were deposited in a special savings account. At every church business conference Mr. Garver, the Renovation Committee Chairman, gave a full report of the progress being made on the exterior of the sanctuary.

In January, permission was granted to Dr. Bryan to attend a conference in Louisville, Kentucky February 26-28 1975 concerning the Inner-City Church; the leader to be Wayne DeHoney. He later reported that the experience was gratifying.

The church was most fortunate to have as guest speaker February 16, 1975, Dr. Barney Hargroves, President of the Baptist World Alliance.

At this time, February 16, 1975, the work on the exterior of the sanctuary began in earnest. Perhaps we should address ourselves to the total project, which spanned several months. During the period the committee met regularly and reported regularly to the church.

Several times during the period the committee was divided into sub-committees who would have a specific task such as paint colors, etc.

It was not until near the end of the project that it was necessary to borrow money. Designated renovation gifts plus funds on hand for the purpose were sufficient for some time.

The contract with Mr. John Thomas was made on a cost-

plus basis, the only way he would accept it because of the uncertain factor which is common in that type restoration.

We had hoped to complete the work for approximately \$60,000.00. Because of considerable difficulty in securing the brown stone, and its elevated cost, plus some other problems, the final cost was \$87,000.00. Following is a list of some of the many items included in the restoration:

1. It was necessary to point nearly all the bricks. That was the most time consuming portion of the work. (Replacing old mortar between bricks)
2. Extensive repairs to the belfry were necessary.
3. Replacement of the brownstone arches.
4. Roof
5. Stone steps.
6. Refinishing and painting all wood work with special attention to the doors.
7. Replacement of gutters and downspouts, using copper.
8. Releading of all stained glass windows.
9. Water proofing walls.

The most expensive single item was the brownstone which had been estimated to cost \$6,000.00, cost was \$12,000.00.

We were so proud with the finished restoration. The work was expertly done, and we continue to receive compliments upon our efforts.

The fine bronze marker on the front of the building was donated by Mr. Bob Cotton of Cotton Funeral Home through the efforts of two of the committee members.

The church is a single entry in the National Register of Historic Buildings. It is so marked through the courtesy of a member of the church who remains anonymous. It is also designated by the Historical Society as New Bern's # 67 point of historical interest.

In February of 1975, Mr. and Mrs. Sam T. Cook presented to the church a beautifully framed restored photograph of the church as it appeared fifty years earlier. Later they presented a photograph of the "Ole Baptist" church as it appeared in the early 19th century. Both are hanging in the archives room.

Also in February 1975, the church voted in conference to celebrate in an appropriate manner the 50th anniversary of the Cooperative Program. On April 20th Mrs. John Lane, Mr. Robert L. Pugh and Mrs. Charles E. Parker were appointed to plan and execute the program.

The "Chipper Club" a Christian fun organization for persons over fifty, was organized in January of 1975 with forty four charter members. They meet twice monthly in the Fellowship hall; they have a devotional and sometimes a special

program after which they enjoy a sandwich or a covered dish lunch. They take trips, usually just one day, using the activity bus. The organization is totally self supporting and a most enjoyable outlet for retired persons.

May 11, 1975, the church celebrated its 166th anniversary, Mothers Day, and the naming and dedication of the library all in one. It was a great day! At the morning worship hour there was a special music program including the anthem, "Praise Ye the Name of the Lord." Mrs. Robert King, Jr. gave the historic highlights, after which Dr. Bryan delivered a moving sermon entitled "The Years Ahead."

The members and their guests enjoyed a delicious covered dish luncheon in the Fellowship Hall.

In the afternoon session which began at 1:30, the choir and congregation sang "The Lily of the Valley", a favorite hymn of Mr. N. E. Mohn. Mrs. Sam T. Cook a next door neighbor, long time friend and fellow church member delivered the tribute which she had written to Nathan Eby Mohn and his beloved wife Florence Laura Hackman Mohn. They were married in New Bern June 17, 1903. Mr. Mohn had left his beloved Pennsylvania Dutch Country earlier and soon after he sent for his sweetheart to join him here. They were completely dedicated to the ministry of the church, particularly missions.

Mrs. Mohn finished her earthly duties and went to her heavenly reward Dec. 20, 1954 at age 73. Mr. Mohn died June 13, 1973 at age 93. It was to these two fine Christian souls that the library of the First Baptist Church of New Bern, N. C. was dedicated May 11, 1975. Portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Mohn were appropriately hung in the library, where they remain this day.

One of the Mohn's children, Charles, the youngest, is an active member of our church, where he has served as Sunday School secretary and a deacon.

The church was asked to participate in the Atlantic Association Sunday School Enlargement Campaign during the week of September 13-17 1975. The total cost of the function was estimated to be \$60.00 for our church.

During the summer months of 1975 the average Sunday School attendance was reported to be 245, down twenty from the same period last year.

During this period the WMU continued an active program under the direction of Mrs. Charles E. Parker. There were 111

members in Baptist Women.

This was also a busy period for the youth of the church according to the report of Mr. Richard Spera, youth director. There was a high school choir trip to Atlanta, Ga. , Junior-Senior festivities, a camping trip to Cedar Island, and a joint bible school with Christ Episcopal Church.

The church approved a recommendation by the youth committee to place basketball goals on the back parking lot for the purpose of recreation with usage limited to periods after 5:30 P.M. The program was not too successful; therefore it was discontinued after a period of time.

During August 1975, the Sunday evening worship was in the form of a Vesper Service; sometimes being held outdoors. Sometimes there was a social hour following in the Fellowship Hall.

In late Summer, 1975, plans were being considered for the beginning of a Day Nursery in the autumn.

The deacons recommended that the pianos belonging to the church be evaluated and that one, such as the church should decide, be donated to the senior's citizens group, which was in dire need of such an instrument.

In September 1975 a request was received from a new Baptist Church being organized in Trenton, N. C. A specific need was the assistance in organizing a Sunday School.

Also in September 1975, under the leadership of Mr. Spera, Minister of Education, a Sunday School News Letter was initiated to help improve communications in that department.

Mrs. Bryan, chairman of the youth committee announced the progress being made on "The Upper Room" a social and recreation area being prepared for the young people of high school age. She asked for donations of furnishings from the membership.

Messengers were elected to attend the associational meeting October 30, at Cherry Point, and October 31 at Beaufort. Dr. Bryan, Mr. Spera and nine members were elected.

Mr. Spera announced in the October church conference that he would like to develop a Baptist Men's Program and an R. A. Organization. This was later accomplished.

We think it most unfortunate that from this date until October 1977, we have only the financial reports and a few printed programs of special events. The minutes of the period

were recorded on loose sheets and kept in a file folder, according to the church clerk. We have searched extensively and have found nothing. Therefore, we shall attempt to record something interesting from the bits and pieces available.

Keep in mind that Dr. Kenneth Bryan is the pastor and Richard Spera the Minister of Education. A church always has a feeling of well being when it meets its financial obligations. For the month of October 1975, our budget goal was \$8,480.76. We gave \$9,386.97. To the Cooperative Program we gave \$2,346.74; the goal was \$2,120.19. We paid \$5,915.11 on the Renovation of the Sanctuary.

At the end of October 1975, the total indebtedness of the church amounted to \$100,322.48.

We have no report, but the Atlantic Baptist Association met in annual session during October. As afore stated the meeting convened in Cherry Point and Beaufort. We had sent delegates.

During November 1975, Baptist Women met for the World Day of Prayer and received an offering for that purpose.

We disbursed \$13,976.59 toward the Sanctuary Restoration Debt.

The W.M.U. had study courses in preparation for the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions.

Hallman Bibles were purchased and presented to the children of certain age groups who were being promoted by the Sunday School.

Again, in December 1975, we gave more than our budget goal. We paid our full allocated amounts to the Cooperative Program and to the Atlantic Association.

The receipts for the Sanctuary Restoration were \$6,731.99. For the "Upper Room", the youth project, we received \$2,000.00.

The W.M.U. reported very good attendance at the daily meetings for the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions. The Lottie Moon Offering was \$3,284.53 to date.

For the year 1975, we had operated on a budget of \$110,250.00 with 25% being designated for the Cooperative Program, and 2.2% for the Atlantic Associational Missions.

In the beginning of 1976 we have a copy of the Stewardship Program (budget) for the year. The amount was \$134,530.00. There were some increases including across the board increases for personnel. The mission gift percentages remained the same

as the year before.

We note that the Sanctuary Restoration payment amounted to \$6,786.93.

During the month of February, 1976, the W.M.U. participated in a very profitable and meaningful prayer retreat.

The parking lot continued to be profitable at this time. The receipts for the month were \$1,527.80 and the cost of maintenance \$528.40.

The financial reports for March remained very general with little change from the normal. One new thing being the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions; the amount received to date was \$1,321.61.

At this time, plans were being made for the Founder's Day celebration scheduled for May 23, 1976. Already, the music department had begun work on their special music scheduled for the special event.

April 1976 budget receipts continued to be very good. Dr. Bryan commended the members for being faithful stewards of their means, as well as their time and talents.

Through the efforts of Mr. Richard Spera and the music director the Contingees gave a performance for which they were allowed \$100.00.

For the month of May, the church disbursed \$790.85 for revival and pulpit supply. We gave \$350.22 for the Little League Baseball fund. Also, \$249.67 was allocated for Founder's Day expenses.

May 23, 1976 the First Baptist Church of New Bern, celebrated it's 167 years of service in the Vineyard of the Lord. The worship began at 10:45 with the great hymn, "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" with Mrs. Fuller at the organ and the trumpet descant played by John Setzer.

Mayor Charles Kimbrell brought greetings from the city of New Bern. From the Atlantic Baptist Association, Rev. Henry Prevette brought greetings. Dr. Nathan C. Brooks, a former member of the church spoke for the North Carolina Baptist Convention. Mrs. Edna Avery Cook brought the historical highlights of First Baptist Church.

After a beautiful program of special music directed by Mr. Julian Wagemaker and Mrs. Andrew Fuller, Rev. Robert L. Pugh presented the guest speaker, Dr. Thomas W. Fryer, a former pastor of the church who delivered the Founder's Day message.

After a delicious luncheon and a social hour with friends, the church reassembled at 2:00 for a delightful soul-stirring Bicentennial Musical presentation of "I Love America", a musical by John W. Peterson and Don Wyrzten.

Julian Wagemaker.....Director
Dr. Bryan.....Narrator
Mrs. Fuller.....Organist
Mrs. Julian Wagemaker.....Pianist

The presentation was in three parts:

"Partriotism for America" (Seven numbers)

"Praise for America" (Eight numbers)

"Prayer for America" (Five numbers)

closing with "The Battle Hymn of the Republic". No one in the First Baptist Church had ever heard a more beautiful musical program. It was a great tribute to our nation!

It was a great treat to have had our visiting speaker, Dr. Nathan Brooks. He was baptized as a boy, in the old pool under the pulpit - long since gone. He has served as president of Carver School of Missions in Louisville, Kentucky, and is now affiliated with State Baptist Convention of N.C.

It was a joy to have Dr. and Mrs. Fryer (Pauline to us). Since leaving our church he had served pastorates in Virginia, Florida and South Carolina. He is a world traveler and is listed in several American and International publications, including "Who's Who in the Protestant Clergy" and "The 2000 Men of Achievement" published in London, England.

Founder's Day was a great day! We felt something of the devout spirit of the Baptists of the "Ole Church" of long, long ago. May their spirit continue to be rekindled in the generations yet to come.

GOOD TO REMEMBER PAST

By Dr. Kenneth B. Bryan,
Pastor
First Baptist Church

We live in an area of North Carolina which is itself a great monument. Two years ago, we celebrated the Bicentennial of America's first provincial Congress. Tryon Palace is an attraction to visitors and a thing of beauty to the residents. Restored homes, historic monuments, and the atmosphere of friendliness and compassion speak of the social grace, architectural and

excellence, and governmental genius of former generations.

It is good to remember the past. Even the Old Testament illustrates God's command to build monuments and remember great events. The Feast of Passover commemorates the deliverance of God's People from Egyptian bondage. Families are instructed to teach God's laws and other great

moral and religious truths to the children, and the children's children. When Joshua led the people of Israel across the Jordan River, and they were safe on the side of the "Promise Land," he commanded them to build a monument of twelve stones. This was a memorial so that future children would ask, "What do these stones mean?" "Tell them," said Joshua, "it is to remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the Ark of God went across." (Joshua 4:7)

This year we are remembering our Founding Fathers and the birth of this nation. This week we are remembering with pride and gratitude those brave Americans who have served and died defending and preserving what we call "The American Way of Life."

It is good to remember our heritage: the ideals, the struggles, the brave deeds of the past! However, it seems better to use the memory as a means to challenge us in our generation. There are still opportunities for improvement in personal growth, community appearance, justice and integrity in government, and the assurance of a better life style for every citizen.

Our son, at the age of 14, found a verse by Edward Everett Hale, which has been in or on my desk for 20 years. I saw it recently posted over his study desk at home, and was touched to see that these lines were significant to one of our teenagers:

At this point in the history of the church, Mr. Richard Spera, minister of Education and Youth, resigned his position with the church. We note that at times one's efforts and accomplishments are not recognized and appreciated until he moves on to greater fields of service. As we have researched the work which was accomplished under Mr. Spera's leadership, we realize how much he did for First Baptist church. He was a quiet, unassuming man, whose feelings and motives ran deeply. We believe that he has a most successful career before him.

"I am only one, but still I am one.

I cannot do everything, but still I can do something;

And because I cannot do everything I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

There are many ways to do the "something I can do." We will not all perform heroic deeds and achieve greatness to which men will build memorials, but we can live worthy of those who have sacrificed and provided for our freedom and dignity. There are places of service in our community that need the help of more of us in building up character and a better life. Some of these services can be rendered through the churches, service clubs, recreation programs, fund raising (Heart, Cancer, United Fund), the Salvation Army and other agencies which depend on charitable volunteers.

Only one memorial is greater than that which we build in making an investment in the lives of others. On the night before Jesus died, when he had shared bread and wine with the disciples, he said, "Do this in remembrance of me." He was speaking about His sacrificial and voluntary death. It is through the memorable death of God's Son that we have "freedom indeed" and in that freedom we have God's presence within that we might live helpful, meaningful and eternal lives!

May 29, '76

During the hot summer months it was gratifying that our finances were in order, and that we were able to begin a new month's work with funds on hand. July 1976 we began with \$6,358.01. We contributed \$500.00 toward the erection of the Atlantic Association Building at Havelock. The fine building has since been completed, furnished and is in constant use by the associational director and his staff, as well as Baptist organizations which required its use from time to time.

The parking lot continued to be profitable.

Sufficient funds had been borrowed to make the required payments on the cost of the exterior restoration of the sanctuary.

As always in the month of September, we promoted the State Missions offering by a study of the mission needs of the denomination. Our offering in September 1976 amounted to \$388.25. We regret that we are not always as liberal in our gifts to State Missions as we are to Home and Foreign Mission needs.

The financial statement for the month of November was very general, with no different or unusual entries.

As usual during those fall months, our church sent messengers to the Atlantic Baptist Associational Meeting, and the Baptist State Convention. We have no reports of either meeting.

Since the headline on the News and Observer for today, August 7, 1983, reads: "Racial lines still distinct at churches in N.C." may we digress and talk about segregation and how it was related to our church in the decade of the sixties and very early seventies.

In our town as well as our churches, there were never any problems of any consequence. I am sure that churches of all denominations had given time and consideration to how best to manage problems, should they arise.

Then, as now, as confirmed in today's news, black people have no desire to desert their customs anymore than white people do.

In the segregation "test years" our church adhered to the rule of welcoming and seating all visitors who chose to attend our worship. That certainly applied to black people and was practiced the few times they came. Today, black people as well as other minorities attend weddings, funerals, special musicals, and they are always welcome. We are so pleased that they are

no longer relegated to the balcony. We must never forget that in the early years of our church, we had black members who, in their own way, made a contribution to the life and progress of this ministry.

Now, back to the year 1977. We have no copy available for the Stewardship (budget) program of the year. We remember that it showed a substantial increase over the \$134,000.00 budget of 1976. I shall just list a few glances at the financial report:

1. Parking lot was profitable.
2. Cooperative program gifts were normal.
3. Associational designated percentages paid.
4. Organist had received an increase in salary.
5. Still no minister of education has been hired.
6. Total amount due on mortgages \$117,799.06.

February and March financial reports were routine except for the Annie Armstrong Offering for Home Missions which amounted to \$2,195.65. The church purchased an electric heater for the organ room and the youth of the church realized \$235.00 profit from the Sweetheart Banquet.

From April until September 14, 1977, we must leave the church to its work and musings as we have no record, not even a financial report.

We do know that in June our elected messengers, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Branch, Mrs. John Lane and Dr. and Mrs. Bryan attended the Southern Baptist Convention. Mr. and Mrs. Branch have been our faithful messengers through the years. They attend all the conventions and represent our church proudly.



DR. KENNETH B. BRYAN
Pastor
1973-1977

“Modern Times”

Dr. Kenneth B. Bryan, pastor of the church since June 15, 1973 resigned his pastorate July 17, effective August 31, 1977. Dr. Bryan and his family had received a call from the First Baptist Church of Lynchburg, Virginia. A church always experiences a feeling of loss and sadness when a pastor moves on to another field of service in the work of the Kingdom. Dr. Bryan was a warm, friendly pastor with great concern for his people. Cutting the tie which bound us together was a traumatic experience for us all. However; we have been most fortunate in that he and his family have returned occasionally to visit.

In early September, the church elected an interim pastor search committee, composed of Mr. Sam Branch, chairman, Miss Jane Marshall Jenkins, Mr. J. R. Garver, Mr. Charles Mohn, and Mrs. Sam Cook. After considering several persons



DR. JOSEPH P. HESTER
1979-1980

and hearing two from our pulpit, we were ready to present a call to an individual. In the meanwhile we had learned that Dr. James F. Heaton, recently retired from eighteen years of service to the Tabernacle Church of Raleigh was available.

I recall so vividly! An inner voice spoke to me saying, "Hear this man." We persuaded Mr. Branch to invite him for the worship hour the following Sunday. He and his lovely wife, Elizabeth (now deceased), came. We knew before his sermon was half finished that we would recommend that the church extend the interim call to the Heaton's. The call was unanimous. They came and remained with us for fourteen months, while the search went on and on and on for a full time pastor.

Dr. Heaton's salary was \$180.00 weekly plus utilities and upkeep of the parsonage the times they chose to occupy it.

Never in our long history were we ever privileged to sit at the feet of one who had such great knowledge of the scriptures and the capability of imparting that knowledge to his hearers. There was never any inattention at his services.

In addition to his superb preaching, he gave wise counsel to the deacons as they attempted to lead and advise us. The church made strides under his leadership.

The Atlantic Baptist Association met October 27 & 28, 1977 with Spring Garden and Parkview Churches. Nine members were elected as messengers and the annual church letter was prepared.

We should also say of Dr. Heaton that he had published a book, "Learn From Me." He has also written Sunday School and Training Union materials. While here and since he left New Bern he has written many sermons for publication.

The W.M.U. director, Mrs. Bob Jones announced at the October church conference that to date we have failed to meet the State Mission goal of \$3,600.00. She urged prayerful consideration of this matter. We were pleased that Mrs. W. L. Robinson, the former Miss Mary Currin, a state W.M.U. worker would be the guest speaker for the October general meeting.

During this period when we were without a pastor, a study group had been formed to study the needs and requirements of the church in order that the pulpit committee, when chosen, would have the results for a tool with which to work.

November 7, 1977, the W.M.U. conducted a service in observance of the World Day of Prayer. An offering was made

for the purpose.

In the month of October, the insurance program was updated. The fire and comprehensive coverage on the property was increased from \$700,000.00 to \$840,000.00 at an increased premium of \$275.00 annually. The Trustees had recommended the change.

November 2, messengers were elected by the church to attend the Baptist State Convention.

The November 16, 1977, church conference noted some interesting observations concerning the financial program. The budget receipts and the parking lot both revealed increases over the prior year.

The Sunday School noted an attendance of 260 on high attendance Sunday.

The church was looking toward the November Mission Study and the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Dr. and Mrs. Perry Langston, visiting speakers, gave the mission study intitled "Rivers of Ink." The goal recommended by the W.M.U. and approved by the church for the offering was set at \$4,100.00.

The Sunday School teaching ministry at the French Memorial Rest Home continued. Mrs. R. J. Hall and Mrs. Tom Blow were elected as new teachers.

Mrs. Fuller of the music department announced that, rehearsals were beginning for the Christmas portion of Handels Messiah, which would be presented as a community effort at Centenary Methodist Church in December. Our choir was invited to participate.

November 27, 1977, the church met in conference to decide upon the replacement of the burned out air conditioning unit of the fellowship hall. The church voted to award the contract to Comfort Air of New Bern, at a cost of \$3,286.00, which was to be paid in three monthly installments of \$1,095.33 each.

The church, meeting in a special called conference December 11, 1977, for the sole purpose of electing a pulpit committee composed of the following persons who were chosen by voice vote:

Dr. Joseph Overby, chairman
Mrs. Peter Heiman
Mrs. Bob Jones
Mrs. Robert King, Jr.
Mr. James R. Garver

Excofficio members were:

Robert King, Jr.
W. K. Russell
Sam Branch.

The regular church conference met December 14, 1977. We were pleased that the budget goal of \$11,335.52 for the month had been met.

A beautiful new piano had been purchased for the fellowship hall the funds coming from the organ fund.

The music director announced that the Handbell Choir would perform at the Tryon Palace Open House gardens Sunday afternoon.

The W.M.U. director announced an offering of \$4,448.67 for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering. The goal had been set at \$4,100.00.

Mr. Sam Branch presented the proposed Stewardship (budget) Program for 1978. The total amount of \$161,522.00 included 27% for the cooperative Program and 2.5% for associational Missions. To date these mission amounts were the largest percentage amounts ever budgeted. Substantial increases were included for a minister and a minister of education when these persons were secured.

The budget was brought to the special Sunday morning conference December 18, and adopted by the church without further discussion.

Two items were of interest in the January 1978 business conference. Namely: a \$5,000.00 designated gift had been applied to the parking lot mortgage, and the pulpit committee reported little progress in their search for a pastor.

During this period in our church, the music department continued very active performances. Mrs. Fuller announced that the Handbell Choirs would participate at the Spring Festival in Greensboro in March.

The Baptist Men began having a monthly breakfast program, which has proven to be effective. Dr. Heaton commended the leaders for the effort.

In February, 1978, Mrs. Fuller of the music department announced that Miss Margaret Graham, an outstanding voice teacher, from New York would teach a one evening a week class for three weeks. A fee was to be charged.

The W.M.U. director made the announcement that the financial goal for the Annie Armstrong Home Mission Offering was set by the church to be \$2,500.00.

Mrs. Peter Heiman reported for the Pulpit Committee that

several churches had been visited and that two additional ones were being considered.

It is commendable that the youth of the church continued to be very active in their organizations and projects despite the fact that the church was without a youth or education minister. Mrs. Garver, youth committee leader, reported that the youth attended the associational youth conference at Temple Church; that they would go to Raleigh for a state conference and in June to Atlanta, Ga. to the Foreign Mission Board.

In April, 1978, the semi-annual associational meeting convened with the First Baptist Church. Mr. Robert King noted that ushers and registrars would be needed.

Mr. Garver of the Pulpit Committee noted that the committee had traveled 3000 miles in their search, and were still not near the commitment stage.

The deacons announced that on February 3, 1978, a request had come from Dr. Randall Lolly, president of Southeastern Seminary that we participate in an effort to honor Dr. Garland A. Hendricks for twenty five years of distinguished service to the school and to countless churches in the area. A specific letter of greeting on the occasion of his semi-retirement was to follow certain specifications in order that all letters might be presented to him in book form. We complied with the wish, and a copy of the letter is attached to the minutes of April 11, 1978.

In the same conference, the question of changing communion from once monthly to once quarterly was presented. It caused considerable discussion. In the final analysis, it was suggested that the decision should be tabled until we secured a full time pastor. Mrs. Fuller moved that the communion be left as is. The motion carried. How many times has the question arisen during our 174 years??? Pay strict attention to the history as you read it!

The question of a new activity bus surfaced. We moved to purchase a new bus, which we needed and which we purchased at a later date for \$26,000.00. The used one originally purchased was in very poor condition and was woefully inadequate for our needs. The new bus is in use today and fills a great need. The church groups which use it pay the operating cost of each trip. The church assumes the cost of upkeep and insurance. Therefore it is a joyful part of the churchwide

ministry rather than a financial burden. We are thankful for it and for the dedicated men who are licensed and insured to operate it.

The July conference was merely routine.

August 16, 1978, at the scheduled church conference, Mr. Sam Branch, finance officer, reported that additional funds had been applied to the sanctuary restoration fund.

The following resignations were accepted with regret: Miss Jo Anne Bradbury as Chapel Choir director, Mr. J. T. Kennedy as deacon because of health problems, Mr. Bob Jones as deacon because he was leaving the city.

The W.M.U. reported that the Organization would participate in the "Christmas in August" mission effort to aid missionaries in their work by supplying items which are not commonly available in all foreign fields. We continue this annually.

Also, the W.M.U. requested that the church set a goal of \$3,100.00 for State Missions. The request was granted.

The church voted to name Robert Lee Pugh teacher emeritus of the Men's Fellowship Class, which he had taught for many years. He had resigned due to his health. Robert Lee Pugh was a faithful servant of the Lord through the First Baptist Church from the days of his youth until the day he died. His influence lives on and on!

The W.M.U. of the church participated in an associational leadership conference, and was host to the group September 18, 1977.

Mrs. Louis B. Daniel (Christine Temple) a devout and faithful member who had taught the Senior Fidelis Class for 50 years retired from her position and was named teacher Emeritus by the church. Her family presented a beautiful portrait of her which hangs in the class room.

New deacons were elected to fill the unexpired terms of those who had resigned.

Messengers were also elected to attend the annual sessions of the Atlantic Baptist Association.

The church voted to hire a person to staff the nursery.

During this particular conference, each member of the pulpit committee spoke concerning the continued search for a full time pastor. They asked that we not become discouraged because of the length of time being consumed with the effort.

We were pleased to hear the announcement at the October

11, 1978, conference, that the exterior restoration debt had been paid in full.

The deacons recommended that the church, through the nominating committee, elect permanent "greeters" (we prefer the term "welcoming committee") to preside at the three main entrances each Sunday morning. This was approved and continues today. It provides a warm friendly service.

An RA organization was scheduled to begin very soon, according to an announcement by the nominating committee.

The church, in special called conference Sunday morning October 29, 1978 called Dr. Joseph P. Hester of Albany, Ga. to become the pastor of the First Baptist Church. At a previous regular church conference, Dr. Overby of the pulpit committee had spoken highly of Dr. Hester's accomplishments during the short years since he had left a lucrative vocation to answer the call to become a minister of the gospel. His pastorate was to become effective November 10, 1978.

Dr. Hester came under the following conditions:

1. Financial Benefits

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| Base salary | \$18,000.00 |
| Utilities | 2,400.00 |
| Car Expense | 2,400.00 |
| Conventions | 1,000.00 |
| Annuity | 1,800.00 |
| Insurance | 850.00 |
| Total | \$26,450.00 |

2. Option of buying a home after six months and receiving \$400.00 monthly housing allowance.

3. That he be allowed six weeks away from the church namely: two weeks vacation, two weeks reserve duty and two weeks revival.

4. That the church assume moving responsibility estimated to be \$3,385.00. (It was considerable more than that figure.)

The deacons also recommended an expenditure of \$3,026.00 for repairs and drapes and carpets which the Hesters desired for the parsonage.

Announcement was made at the November 15, 1978 church conference through the W.M.U. director that the Foreign Mission Study course would be taught by Miss Jane Marshall Jenkins November 29, 1978. The Week of Prayer would be held Monday through Friday of the following week. The Lottie Moon Foreign Mission offering was fixed by the church at \$4,500.00.

Upon the departure of Dr. and Mrs. Heaton, they were given a beautiful reception and a purse of \$1,224.00 by the church. Their ministry among us was certainly the mountain-top experience of our time. No one ever preached like Dr. Heaton.

Dr. and Mrs. Hester were the parents of four older boys and two girls who were younger. Only the girls lived at home. Mrs. Hester (Marjorie) was a talented musician, adding much to the program of the church.

Dr. Hester was evangelistic, so he immediately began the promotion of plans for a television ministry.

The Stewardship committee presented to the church the budget for 1979 amounting to \$173,105.00, the largest in the history of First Baptist Church.

There was much discussion before it was finally adopted; the reason being the fact that the Cooperative Program was reduced from 27% to 20%. This was done to provide support for a television ministry for which \$12,117.00 was budgeted.

A salary was also included for a minister of education and youth when such a person was secured.

The church voted to participate in the World Missions Conference sponsored by the Atlantic Baptist Association March 9-16, 1979. We shall report on the occasion later.

During December 1979, the youth of the church had a very active holiday schedule. They had a float, "Come All Ye Faithful" in the city Christmas parade and sang carols from the front steps of the church. Passing shoppers stopped to listen and enjoy the Christmas music.

In the December conference, the church upon the recommendation of the deacons, voted to donate the old church bus to the Neuse River Baptist Church.

January 17, 1890, the moderator, Mr. Branch, gave special recognition to the parking lot committee, Mr. Roy Dixon, Chairman. Mr. Dixon announced that in the four years of its operation, the parking lot had earned for the church approximately \$45,000.00 in excess of expenses.

Mrs. Charles Parker and Mr. Robert King, Jr. were appointed as church missionaries to assist the pastor in his ministry to the needs of the congregation. They have permanent hospital passes just as ministers have. Both are faithful to their responsibilities.

Announcement was made that the State Evangelistic Conference would meet in February in Fayetteville. We recall that

a number of us, including Dr. & Mrs. Hester, went in the activity bus. A black minister preached a soul-stirring sermon intitled "Amazing Grace." I never heard a finer one!

February 2, 1979 the church adopted the Southern Baptist Convention logo (symbol) to be used on our church stationery to identify us as a participating Southern Baptist church.

Dr. Hester announced that he would preach at the March revival and that Gerald Carter of High Point, N.C., had been engaged to direct the music.

At the March business conference, the Missions Committee announced that the television program would begin the first Sunday in April, being aired over channel 12, WCTI. At the time the program was controversial and remains so today. There are members who question the value of it and believe that the money could be used to better advantage.

March 14, 1979, the church purchased an addressograph machine for \$2,200.00 from Branch's Inc. Mr. Branch allowed the church to pay for the machine when it was convenient.

The first monthly cost of the TV broadcast was \$1,345.00. Of course considerable funds had been expended for lighting and equipment, preparatory to airing the program.

A report was received on the 1978 audit which was in order.

On April 11, 1979, upon the recommendation of the Building and Planning Committee the John Peterson Architectural Firm was employed to give direction on the existing church buildings, their total compensation not to exceed \$2,500.00.

On this date Dr. Hester advised the church that he had decided to purchase a home as had been agreed upon when he accepted the pastorate. We shall conclude the subject of the house at this time.

A committee of five persons with Charles Mohn as chairman was appointed to formulate guide-lines relative to the parsonage. There was much opposition to the idea of selling the parsonage to anyone. There were those who felt that we should always have a home for our preacher! That feeling prevails today. Our parsonage was sold to Dr. and Mrs. Hester for \$62,343.00. The trustees who signed the deed were Samuel P. Branch, George R. Burnham and Jennings T. Kennedy. It is recorded in the Craven County Register of Deeds Office in Deed Book 941, page 331, date of recording 24 of July 1979. An abstract was taken from the deed and is printed with some others elsewhere in this history.

The money received was deposited with the best financial resources at the time hoping that rates would remain high and that the earnings would be sufficient to pay housing for a pastor. Today the return from the investment is used to pay housing for our present pastor.

In April 1979, plans were completed for the celebration of Founders Day, May 6, 1979. Actually it was more like a celebration of Wake Forest University. Dr. Overby spoke on "What Wake Forest Means to Me." Dr Hester spoke on "A Founding-Wake Forest University and the New Bern Baptist." Dr. Ralph Seales, president of Wake Forest University, delivered the message.

Luncheon was served to the members and their guests in the fellowship hall.

At the evening service a time of silent prayer was observed in memory of the founding fathers and the thousands of dedicated men and women who have served this great church through its 170 years of following Christ together.

At every church conference the urgency of acquiring a youth director was brought before the people. At this same conference it was noted that the cost of the TV ministry for the month was \$1,603.40, and that we lacked \$3,000.00 in meeting our financial goal for the month.

In June Dr. Hester made the announcement that the church council had met regarding the hiring of a new staff member.

Also in June Mr. Garver, chairman of the Building and Planning Committee, asked permission of the church to apply to the Kellenberger Foundation for a grant to aid in the restoration. Permission was granted and the application was made. We shall discuss the matter further at a later time.

July 25, 1979 a change was made in the By-laws of the church, namely: "Except as otherwise stated in the constitution, all members of the church committees will be elected for a maximum of a three year term."

The youth committee reported that the youth-led revival had been a great success.

The church approved the purchase of the following for use in the fellowship hall:

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Five tables | \$279.05 |
| Thirty chairs | 225.00 |
| One caddy | 90.00 |
| For a total of | \$594.05 |

The church council had recommended that a call be extended

to Mr. Truitt King to become our associate pastor in education and youth. The matter was tabled to be voted on at a special conference July 29, 1979. There was not a two-thirds aye vote as required by the constitution. Mr. King was not called.

August 15, 1979, the trustees recommended that the insurance program of the church again be updated. Coverage on the buildings was changed to \$913,000.00 and on the contents to \$60,000.00.

The pastor encouraged the church to participate in the fund raising campaign for building the Associational Center at Havelock.

September 12, 1979, in conference the church was reminded that September is State Mission's month, and that a worthy offering should be given. The goal was \$3,000.00.

The pastor announced that he had secured the services of Rev. Jim Johnson and Gerald Carter for the October Revival services.

The W.M.U. director announced that November 5 was the World Day of Prayer and that we would observe it.

October 17, 1979, six messengers were elected to represent the church at the annual meeting of the Atlantic Baptist Association and five of the six persons were elected messengers to the Baptist State Convention.

The goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for Foreign Missions was set at a figure of \$4,500.00.

During the conference of December 12, 1979, Mr. Garver, chairman of Building and Planning spoke concerning the renovation and restoration of the sanctuary interior. The committee recommended that the church proceed with the project at an approximate cost of \$350,000.00. Also that the church spend an additional \$1,500.00 to complete the preliminary architectural plans. Further, that the church again apply for a grant from the Kellenberger Foundation and that the church establish a renovation-restoration fund with the idea of having \$200,000.00 in hand before letting any contracts. The motion was made and approved by the church.

December 21, 1980, the church met in a special called session to vote on the question of whether or not to continue the TV ministry. The matter had been discussed and tabled at a monthly church conference. The program had been controversial since its inception. The church attendance was

poor that Sunday and some members abstained. The vote was 110 yes and 89 no. It seems unfortunate that a program of that magnitude did not receive support from the total church.

Again the roof of the old education building was in very poor state of repair and needed to be replaced. The contract for the work was let to E. L. Roofing Co. for a cost of \$6,280.00, the amount to be made in four equal payments of \$1,570.00.

The Stewardship program for 1980 for \$211,274.00 was adopted by the church at a special called conference for the purpose. It reflected salary increases for the staff, \$1,300.00 for the TV ministry, but no increases in the Cooperative program which remained at 20%. Routine entries such as literature also increased due to inflation. We were all pleased that \$1,500.00 was budgeted for the Associational Building Fund.

At the January 16, 1980 conference, Mrs. Joe Overby, W.M.U. director, reported that the church had exceeded the \$4,500.00 goal for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering for Foreign Missions.

Roy Dixon gave the following report on the parking lot: receipts January-June 1979 were \$7,165.65, July-December 1979 \$4,564.40 for a total of \$11,730.05. Total receipts since the beginning were \$85,734.05. Roy was praised for his fine management of the lot.

The pastor announced that the State Evangelistic Conference would convene in Greensboro February 4 and 5, and the World Mission's Conference March 9-16.

The deacons presented three recommendations, namely:

1. That a parking lot committee be elected to assist Roy Dixon.
2. That a T. V. committee be elected to oversee technical and other matters.
3. That the church council immediately begin a search for an education - youth director.

All items were approved.

At the March 12, 1980, church conference, Mr. Garver of the Building and Planning committee announced that the church had been awarded a grant of \$10,000.00 to be paid after December 1, 1980 for a specific restoration project. To date we have not received the fund but we hope to qualify when we begin the actual restoration.

In April Mr. Charles Pace presented the report of the 1979 audit which was in order and was accepted.

Dr. Joe Overby reported an improvement in the attendance

at Training Union.

Mrs. Overby, W.M.U. director, reported that only \$2,600.00 had been given toward the Annie Armstrong goal of \$3,000.00.

At the June 11, 1980, conference, plans were completed by the committee for the youth-led revival scheduled for July. Mrs. Garver was very optimistic.

July 16, 1980, the deacons recommended that the church establish a memorial in memory of our beloved departed member Louis B. Daniel, in agreement with the wishes of the family, with memorial funds donated for the purpose. The memorial was to consist of a "Book of Memory" and a memorial stand. Future memorials would be written in the book. The motion was approved as presented.

August 13, 1980, the church in conference heard the resignation of Dr. Joseph P. Hester as pastor of First Baptist Church. Acceptance of the resignation was moved and seconded. He had accepted a call to the Cottage Hill Baptist Church of Mobile, Alabama.

It would be impossible to evaluate a pastorate of such short duration, but all of us pray God's blessings upon Dr. Hester and his family as he continues his ministry.

A pulpit committee was immediately appointed with Mr. W. D. Lee, Jr. as chairman. An interim committee was also appointed with Mr. Sam Branch as chairman.

Dr. C. R. Pittard, retired Baptist minister who lives in New Bern and is a member of our church, was invited to conduct Wednesday evening prayer services, which he agreed to do. He was to remain our midweek minister throughout the interim period. He was, and is, a blessing to the church.

September 14, 1980, Dr. Ben Philbeck, professor of Hebrew and Old testament Interpretation, and chairman of the Old Testament Department of Southeastern Seminary of Wake Forest, was called as the interim pastor of First Baptist Church. He accepted the call, agreeing to preach two sermons on Sunday and to be available for counseling on Sunday afternoons. His salary is not listed in the minutes of the time. He was a very able man, an eloquent speaker, a warm friendly personality whom we felt fortunate to have as our undershepherd. We wanted to keep him permanently!

October 8, 1980 messengers were elected to attend the annual associational meeting October 30-31. Ten persons were named.

At the conference, Mr. Garver reported for the Building and Planning committee reporting on some of the major plans for the restoration. We shall list them this one time in view of the fact that the actual work will begin in a few months, hopefully, and then we will receive progress reports regularly. The committee recommended:

1. Restoring woodwork to original dark.
2. Three gothic arches in pulpit area.
3. Gothic arched doors to pulpit area and center back.
4. Replace side wood panels and wood paneling in front of pulpit with plain paneling.
5. Redo choir screen with decorative woodwork same as front of rear balcony.
6. Replace columns at side of pulpit, edge of choir and baptistry with gothic arches.
7. Replaster and paint vestibule. Restore floor to original wood.
8. New heating and cooling.
9. New lighting throughout.
10. New furniture (or refinishing) except pulpit furniture.
11. New electrical system
12. New carpet.
13. Restore balcony stairways.
14. Provide handicapped entry into the sanctuary.

Certainly I must have overlooked something!

The church voted to begin planning to raise the necessary funds. We shall discuss the successful plan in a few months.

In March Mrs. Fuller of the music department announced that the Sanctuary Choir would present the beautiful Contata "Man of Sorrows" Sunday April 12.

Mrs. Robert King, III (Penny) reported on the childrens media center, to which she had given so much time and effort over a period of many months. A "Teachers Center" had been set up to aid teacher and a "book buggy" was to distribute books to the classes on Sunday mornings.

The youth committee attended an orientation youth program in Raleigh recently. They were making plans for the youth led revival which will be held June 19-25, 1981. It would culminate with the church wide picnic on Saturday. These revivals have been a great spiritual experience for our youth as well as adults.

While we are on the subject of the youth of the church, it seems fitting to mention Mr. E. J. "Granddaddy" Crump who came to New Bern when he retired, because his son, Rev. Harry Crump and his family were here. Immediately he became "one of the youth". He shared in their activities. He was always present for their church social gatherings; he was their cook and their chauffeur always having his little station wagon filled if they required transportation. He spoke "their language",

and they loved him and have sorely missed him since his death October 6, 1979.

April 23, 1981, the church voted upon the recommendation of the deacons to paint the stairs, hallways and secretary's office in the Old Educational Building, and to carpet floors and stairs. The cost, it was hoped, could be kept at \$2,000 or less. The work was done and greatly enhanced the appearance of the area. The cost was greater than the suggested amount. It cost \$4,600. Isn't that always true in these uncertain times in which we live?

In June the W.M.U. made and filled Campers Kits for underprivileged children. This service we have provided for years for the Department of Social Services to aid in their summer programs.

At the June 17, 1981, church conference, the moderator, Dr. Overby, spoke for the Personnel Committee, soliciting suggestions from the membership relative to securing a Minister, a Minister of Education, a church secretary and a custodian.

Also at this conference, the church was advised by Rev. Voorhes, Moderator of the Atlantic Association, that the financial condition was very poor at the time; that the salary of the Director of Missions was in arrears. He asked our consideration of the matter.

July 15, 1981, the Pulpit Committee announced that definite consideration was being given to one individual at this time. They asked our indulgence concerning the matter.

On Wednesday evening, August 19, 1981, Rev. David L. Ward, an Associate Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tenn. and Mrs. Ward (Jo, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Pittard of our church) were invited by the committee to speak, with the idea of becoming our pastor. The people liked this popular couple very much.

A special conference was called August 30 to vote upon extending a call to Rev. and Mrs. Ward. Rev. Ward had requested a secret ballot with a unanimous vote or he would decline the call. The vote was 230 "Yes" and 5 "No" votes. We were disappointed.

So, the pulpit committee had to intensify their search for the person whom God would direct to our door. They took courage as they continued their efforts in our behalf.

So, while we continued to enjoy the preaching and the

leadership of Dr. Ben Philbeck, as we awaited the selection and arrival of a new full time pastor, let us take time out for some interesting side glances in 1983.

Early on in researching the materials available, we realized how incomplete were many of the records, particularly these dealing with real estate. Therefore I solicited the services of Miss Elizabeth Moore, noted local historian and genealogist, who has been of invaluable help. We have copies of some of the old deeds which we shall place in the Archives Room. Abstracts taken from many of them will be printed in the back of this book of history following its completion. There will also be some old deed copies.

Some accomplishments and/or persons deserve extra special mention among these pages. One such person came to our church May 2, 1915, as a teenager with her mother and sister from Morehead City. Every day for 68 years, 3 months and 13 days, (as of today, August 15, 1983) she has been faithful to the total ministry of the church. At no period in her life has she ever been inactive. She has always practiced tithing, believing it to be a number one priority of her stewardship as well as her offerings. Her advancing years have failed to "slow her down". She attends every worship service, prayer service, Wednesday Evening Fellowship Hour as well as being active in the W.M.U. and the Chipper Club, a Christian "fun organization" for retired persons. Her Sunday School Class couldn't meet without her. We salute and give thanks for Mrs. Herlot L. Winfield, the former Virgie Eaton! May God bless and keep her.

We haven't mentioned the election of officers every time it occurred, but it is well to note that through our long years of service, the church has been diligent in naming worthy nominating committees who have striven to obtain the best leadership possible for all of our church agencies and departments. Every year much time and thought is spent on the effort. To these countless people, year after year, we owe a debt of gratitude.

In 1983 a look at the Mohn Media Library is in order since our library facility has just been moved to a newly renovated area of the old Educational Building. It is most attractive, well arranged, and contains hundreds of volumes to be used for the aid and enjoyment of adults as well as students and young children.

From the "Atlantic Messenger" dated September 1901, Dr. Hight C. Moore wrote in an article concerning our church, and we quote: "The Sunday School Library, consisting of 126 select volumes, so generously donated by Brother A. D. Ward, has been received, put in place, and opened to the scholars. Bro. H. B. Smith was chosen librarian". This is no doubt the second library we had. Once, earlier, a library was mentioned.

There is such a wealth of knowledge, pleasure and entertainment to be found between the covers of a book! We deplore the fact that so many, many people do not experience the joy of reading because they do not read. Please use our church library!

From the beginning of our history, from time to time we have addressed ourselves to the subject of the Music Program of the church. So, it is in order to discuss it one final time as we live the last quarter of the 20th Century, and as we near the end of the recording of these pages of history.

Our music ministry is churchwide. Mrs. Julian Wagemaker is organist and Rev. James Norris is Minister of Music and Youth. He trains and directs the adult Sanctuary Choir which performs with excellence. We have always been complimented upon the quality and performance of our music.

The Youth Choir performs usually at the evening worship service, and on special occasions. They frequently compete at district and state levels.

The Children's Choir (1-6) is so dear! They are delighted when they perform at worship services.

There are Handbell Choirs for the youth and adults, as well.

There are many special musical events during the year in our own church, and we participate in community efforts as well, such as sharing annually in singing the Christmas portion of Handel's Messiah at the Centenary United Methodist Church.

We own numerous upright pianos, a baby grand and of course, the pipe organ with which we have experienced some few problems during the past year.

We own four octaves of handbells and hope to add to our collections.

Our church has always had an Outreach Ministry. Perhaps in our early years we simply described it as "visiting". In our modern day programs we attempt to keep in contact with the total church by visiting the home bound members, the new

converts and transferred members, as well as prospects who are new arrivals in our city.

Acutely ill and bereaved persons always have priority over other visiting needs.

So let's leave our musings as we return to the day-to-day occurrences under the very capable leadership of Dr. Philbeck, our interim pastor.

Meeting in monthly conference October 14, 1981, the church approved the recommendation that Jim Whitehead be supported in the licensing procedure as he left our church for Southeastern Seminary to prepare himself for full-time Christian service as a minister of the gospel.

At the same conference, messengers were appointed to attend the Baptist State Convention as well as the annual meeting of the Atlantic Baptist Association.

The church voted to set up a Micro Computer Savings Account for voluntary contributions, in order that such a machine might be purchased at a future time, when feasible, for the use of the Sunday School.

The financial report for September which was discussed and adopted at the October conference, was mainly routine. We noted that only \$804.00 had been received for State Missions. The amount expended for the T.V. program was \$1,375.00 for the month.

A special church conference was called October 25, 1981 for the purpose of hearing Kay Williams, Executive Director of Swiss Bear, speak on behalf of the Preservation Foundation. Our involvement would entail a contribution of \$5,000.00 to aid toward acquiring an option on the adjacent Old Belk Building to prevent an unsatisfactory tenant from purchasing the property.

A motion was made and carried to contribute the money. Many people present thought that there was undue alarm and that the procedure was not necessary.

Nothing ever came of it, and in a few months the vote was rescinded.

For the month of November 1981, a Revival was planned, a W.M.U. Study Course was taught, and plans were completed for the Observance of the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, and for the Lottie Moon Christmas offering.

A copy of the budget was presented for 1982 for consideration, to be voted on at a later date. The total

stewardship program was \$240,251.00 with increases in most departments, mainly because of escalating costs in every area.

The Cooperative program was increased to 21% which pleased everyone, and more funds were earmarked for the Associational Building debt retirement.

The church met in called conference Wednesday, November 25th, in the church sanctuary for the purpose of hearing the report of the Pulpit Committee through the chairman Mr. W. C. Lee, Jr., W. K. Russell was moderator for the called session.

Mr. Lee recommended for the committee that Rev. Joseph S. Larrimore of Monroe, N.C., be called as pastor of the First Baptist Church, and that a standing vote should be taken Sunday morning, November 29th.

Further that Rev. Larrimore should be called for the following salary consideration:

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Salary | \$20,000.00 |
| Housing | 4,800.00 |
| Utilities | 2,900.00 |
| Car Expense | 2,400.00 |
| Insurance (H&L) | 1,900.00 |
| Retirement | 2,000.00 |
| Convention Allow. | 2,000.00 |

Other considerations included four weeks vacation, and two weeks for revivals and conferences, and a full time secretary.

At the pre-announced conference Sunday morning, Nov. 29, 1981, Rev. Larrimore was extended the official call which he accepted. This is the second time in history that the church had called a pastor from Monroe, N. C.. Rev H. C. Moore also came from Monroe.

Rev. Larrimore and his wife Edith, have five children, all grown. Mrs. Larrimore, the former Edith Bivens, is a musician and social worker. Rev. Larrimore was born in Miami, Florida, March 23, 1925 and has an impressive background. He was educated in the Florida Public Schools, the University of Tampa, and at Wingate and Wake Forest University. He received his theological training at Andover-Newton and his graduate studies at Emory and Princeton Theological Schools.

Rev. Larrimore served in the Navy in World War II where he served in both the Atlantic and Pacific. He holds both the Navy and Presidential Citations and the Bronze Star for personal bravery.

He has served pastorates in Somervill, Mass., Southbor, Mass., Tarboro, N. C., and Monroe, N. C. Rev. Larrimore writes, paints, and enjoys woodworking. He is reputed to be

an excellent counselor, a good administrator, and organizer. He proudly admits that he is Southern Baptist through and through and supports its programs.

For the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions, under the direction of Mrs. Obie Willingham, president of Baptist Women, we had made beautiful flags of the foreign lands being studied. During the programs there was the Parade of Flags which was beautiful, impressive and symbolic of the lands which they represented. We have added to the collection and continue to use them.

In the December 1981 conference, the W.M.U. announced that \$4,500.00 had been received toward the Lottie Moon goal.

Sunday evening December 27, 1981, Dr. Ben Philbeck and Dr. & Mrs. C. R. Pittard were honored at a beautiful reception in the Fellowship Hall at the close of the worship service. Gifts were presented.

Charles N. Mohn was elected as a Trustee of the church to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of George Russell Burnham.

Sunday evening, January 3, 1982, the church was host at a beautiful candlelight reception to honor and to welcome Rev. and Mrs. Larrimore to the church. It was well attended, there being some visitors.

January 14, 1982 the Pastor and members of the Missions Committee were invited to attend a meeting being sponsored by the New Bern Ministerial Association for the purpose of formulating a Religious Community Service Program. The organization was formed and our church belongs, just as many other local churches do. We contribute financially, and physically. The organization maintains a center for the distribution of goods and/or services. Each member church provides a committee which mans the center according to schedule. The social ministries provided are varied and certainly rewarding. It is a non-profit organization, and is governed by by-laws.

Just today (August 17, 1983) I noticed the activity there as people are coming to secure clothing for their children in preparation for school opening.

The church voted to continue the designation of 6.04% of our Cooperative Program funds for another year to Wake Forest University.

In the monthly conference of February 17, 1982, the church

set the Annie Armstrong Home Mission goal at \$4,200.00.

Mrs. Elizabeth Fuller also announced the the Handbell Choirs would participate at Meredith College February 20, 1982.

In the financial report for February 1982, we disbursed our 21% for the Cooperative Program, 2.8% for Associational Missions, and 2% toward the Associational Building mortgage. We are gratified when we meet our mission needs.

The TV monthly cost continued at \$1,375.00 monthly unless we have additional technical costs.

There is always building in progress! March 24, 1982 Roy Dixon of building and grounds announced that he was building a new Sunday School room at the end of the hall of the old Educational Building, which will house the newly formed Couples Class. This area was once the kitchen long ago.

At this time, Mrs. Andrew Fuller asked to be replaced as church organist, but she will continue to direct the Sanctuary Choir. Her salary was to continue at the same figure.

The church noted that the Pollocksville Baptist Church, a member of the Association, was celebrating the 100th Anniversary of its founding. A letter of congratulations was dispatched to this fine church.

Messengers were elected to represent the church at the semi-annual meeting of the Atlantic Association.

Again, we begin the search for an Associate Pastor. At a called conference, April 18, 1982, a committee, led by Dr. John Bennett, was elected to conduct the search for such a staff person.

At the church conference of May 12, 1982, the following reports were given and/or actions taken.

1. Exterior woodwork of the sanctuary, including the tower, had been painted.
2. Mrs. ulian Wagemaker was hired as church organist.
3. Mrs. Ray Stainback was elected as Vacation Bible School Director.
4. Miss Jane Marshall Jenkins was elected to fill the unexpired term of Mr. Terry Davidson as church clerk.
5. The newly formed couples class was named the "C. R. Pittard Class" in his honor.
6. The Annie Armstrong Home Mission offering amounted to \$2,960.17.
7. The Centenary College Choir of Shreveport, Louisiana was scheduled to perform in our church Wednesday, June

2nd. (They came and sang one of the most beautiful concerts we've ever been privileged to hear.)

8. Messengers were elected to attend the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The church conference of June 16, 1982 was concerned with matters of great importance to the membership. The first, the recommendation of the Search Committee, that the church call Rev. James F. Norris, III, as Minister of Music and Youth.

Mr. James Franklin Norris, III, was born July 29, 1955 in Charleston, South Carolina. He was educated in the Charleston Public Schools and the College of Charleston where he received his degree in music. He graduated from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity degree in church music.

Before accepting the responsibility of Associate Pastor in Music/Youth at our church, he had served as Music Director of First Church, Ravenel, S. C.; Minister of Music at Hillcrest Church in Charleston, and Minister of Music, Rolesville Baptist Church, Rolesville, N. C. He was ordained February 28, 1982. He is married to the former Katherine Cannon of Charleston, S. C. They have no children.

The second, that the church adopt the "Together We Build" program, "TWB", the organized effort to raise the funds necessary for the restoration of the interior of the sanctuary, a vital project which has been in the planning for some years.

Both items were approved but were tabled for a churchwide vote Sunday, June 20, 1982.

On the above mentioned date at a called conference, both items were presented, voted upon and accepted by the church.

Let us look at "TWB", the largest financial effort ever undertaken by the First Baptist Church of New Bern, N.C

Mr. Kip Owens, denominational consultant, led the church through the initial stages, and advised us throughout the weeks of the campaign. The basic goal was \$250,000.00; the Challenge goal, \$300,000.00. The Victory goal was \$350,000.00. We subscribed \$325,000.00 plus. We owe a debt of gratitude to Rev. Larrimore for his pastoral leadership, to Dr. Joe Overby, the overall director of the campaign, and his corps of dedicated assistants. The cost of the campaign was approximately \$10,000.00.

The pledges are being paid regularly, and on time. At this

time we have approximately \$100,000.00 in hand toward the restoration project. (August 1983)

June 30, 1982 Mr. Bud Garver, chairman of the Building and Planning Committee presented plans for the moving and renovating of the pastor's study, church offices, library and Senior Fidelis Classroom. The recommendation had come from the deacons. The cost was to be defrayed by budget allocations for repair and amintenance of church buildings and grounds. The renovation was done satisfactorily, and provided office space for the Church Bookkeeper, the Minister of Music, and improved library space which we did not have heretofore. As always, the project cost more than anticipated: \$22,000.00 plus. Some decorative accents were donated which have greatly enhanced the appearance of the new offices.

Rev. Larrimore commented that he and Mrs. Larrimore, having been on the field for six months, wanted to express again to the membership their appreciation for the warmth, the friendship, and the acceptance they have felt among the church family. Mr. Larrimore stated upon his arrival here that he did not plan any drastic changes in the church operation, but he did wish to establish his own Deacon Ministry Plan.

Again, the time for the observance of Communion was changed! This has been happening for 175 years come next May! Rev. Larrimore recommended that the service be changed from monthly observance to quarterly observance. The church approved the change of time, desiring that the serivce be held in the morning rather than the evening worship hour. The date was August 11, 1982.

The deacons had also recommended that \$6,000.00 be diverted from the Renovation Fund to pay for heating and air conditioning for the newly renovated office area. This amount was in addition to funds previously earmarked for the purpose. The request was granted.

September 15, 1982, Norman B. Kellum, Jr. was elected as a deacon to serve a three year term. His ordination was scheduled for September 26, 1982.

Church and Sunday School officers were elected for the ensuing year, and a routine financial report was read and adopted.

October 13, 1982, Miss Doris Walters, missionary to Japan, who was on furlough, spoke in a most fascinating manner of her work in the Orient, using a slide program to illustrate. One

of our W.M.U. Mission groups is named in her honor.

Messengers were elected to both the Atlantic Association annual meeting and the Baptist State Convention, which met that year in Fayetteville, N.C.

Meeting in conference November 17, 1982, J. R. (Bud) Garver recommended that the church vote to immediately proceed with the planned renovation and or restoration of the interior of the Sanctuary. A motion was made and carried.

Recommendation was also made that the Building and Planning Committee be increased to the original number of fifteen, since some persons were no longer available to serve. Additional persons were later elected. They were:

Mr. Mike Monette

Mrs. John S. Hudson

Mr. Norman B. Kellum, Jr.

Mr. Joe Rose

Mrs. Herman Mattocks

In December baskets were placed in strategic places in the church for the receipt of clothing and non-perishable foods for the Religious Community Services.

The budget of \$250,178.00 for 1983 was presented for further study. It included increases in some areas, but the percentages to missions remained the same.

The budget was adopted at a special conference called for the purpose December 19, 1982. We have approximately 600 local members at present.

The Lottie Moon Foreign Mission goal was set at \$6,200.00.

January 9, 1983 Mr. R. G. Puckett, the new Editor of the Biblical Recorder, spoke at the morning worship hour in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Biblical Recorder which was begun in New Bern by Dr. Thomas Meredith, pastor of the First Baptist Church.

In the conference of January 12, 1983, the church authorized the Archives Committee to prepare a complete history of the First Baptist Church of New Bern, N. C. Mrs. Sam T. Cook was chosen to research and record it.

Mrs. Joseph Larrimore, the W.M.U. Director, announced the Mission Study for Home Missions for March 2nd and the Mission goal was \$3,000.00.

Mr. James Norris, Minister of Music and Youth announced that the youth work is successful, that the Valentine party was well attended and profitable, and the young people are all enjoying the Sunday evening Fellowship gatherings.

Brotherhood and R. A. attendance and interest also showed

some improvement.

March 16, 1983 the church voted to employ The John Peterson Architectural firm to complete the architectural plans for the renovation and restoration of the church for a fee amounting to 10% of the renovation and restoration cost.

At this time the firm named is busily engaged in the task. Mr. Garver, chairman of the Building and Planning Committee is in frequent contact with them.

April 13, 1983 Dr. James Goode of Southeastern Seminary was invited to the church relative to making a survey of needed organ space while we were beginning the sanctuary restoration. The request was made by the Music Committee. Mr. Garver also announced that one church pew had been removed from the church for refinishing. The result was beautiful and the cost reasonable. No decision has been made relative to the pews.

Miss Jane Marshall Jenkins, clerk , was appointed by the church to research the church minutes, and record all policies established by a vote of the church, and all additions or revisions to the church constitution: the result is to be in printed form, and made available to the church membership.

May 2, 1983, Dr. Craig P. Skinner of the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary asked if our church would donate one video tape of an appropriate service for their teaching library for ministerial students. The church gladly granted the request.

The church received a quarterly report for the religious Community Service ending March 30, 1983. The funds handled during the period amounted to \$7,927.49 with our church having contributed \$320.00. The organization disbursed \$3,000.00 for benevolences. Items mentioned were food, lodging, medicine, clothing, transportation, meals, food orders, fuel, electricity and rent.

Messengers were elected to attend the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Pittsburg, Pa., June 13-15, 1983.

At the June 15th conference, Mrs. John Peterson, Jr., Outreach Leader, reported that the recent survey taken in King's Row and College Park went very well. Results of the survey will be evaluated later.

In conference July 13, 1983 Mr. J. R. Garver, Chairman of the Finance Committee, made several observations. He cautioned the membership to be consistent with their budget

gifts during the lax summer period. He also announced that the late Mr. George Holland left in his will a bequest of \$10,000.00 to the church. The chairman recommended that the church place the gift in the Together We Build account. It was so ordered.

Mr. Garver, in his capacity as Building and Planning Chairman, stated that the mechanical planning is under way for the renovation. The plans for the roof of the old Educational Building had to be altered slightly, since the "A" type was not feasible.

There is also a possibility that we may have a memorial stained glass window at the back of the Baptistry.

The Moderator appointed a Steering Committee for the observance of our 175th Anniversary in May, 1984, namely:

Mr. Norman B. Kellum, Jr., Chairman
Mrs. John Hudson
Mrs. Woodrow Thomas
Mrs. J. R. Garver
Mr. Jack G. White
Mrs. Herman Mattocks
Mrs. John Thomas

The monthly church conference of the First Baptist Church was held August 17, 1983 in the chapel with 48 persons present. The financial report, which was mainly routine, was read and adopted.

The slate of officers was presented by Mr. Charles Yohn, who also announced the list of committees. They were approved by the church.

There were no recommendations from the deacons.

As we begin to "wind down" these pages of history, may we take time to recap for you the names of persons who dedicated their lives to full time Christian service, either as preachers of the gospel, missionaries, christian workers in State organizations, or directors of church ministeries. We do not have available all of the dates, so we shall mention them according to the times we believe they dedicated themselves.

Mr. York - 1820 (no other name given)
Ethel Eaton Pittard
Nathan Brooks
Ernelle Brooks
John Lane
Robert L. Pugh
Lillian Bryant Lane
L. Guilford Daugherty

Harry Robert Kahn
James Leathers
Sanford Catlett
Gloria Kimball
Beth McPhail
Noel Hollis
Jim Whithead
Joey Faucette

May 11, 1809, our founding fathers planted a tiny acorn which germinated and grew, spreading it's branches far and wide. They are:

The Tabernacle Baptist Church
National Avenue Baptist
Cherry Point Baptist
Neuse River (Battleground Park) Church
Trent Court Mission
Colony Baptist Church
And, the ends of the earth.

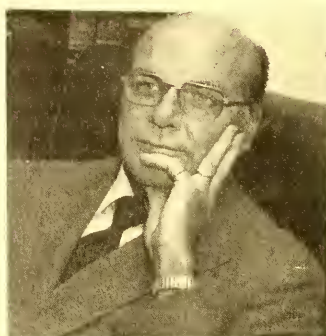
For all of these, we give thanks!

This history was not intended to be a beautifully crafted work of literary art, but rather a remembering of those who blazed the trails which have brought us to the here and now.

During the shifting sands and changing times, Baptists have remained constant in their dedication to the church and the religious principles on which it was founded.

We think it fitting to close this history with a quote from a brief history which Rev. Fred W. Eason wrote 100 years ago and had published in the "Religious Herald" while he was our pastor 1878-83:

"We thank God and take courage! Thank Him for what he has done in the departed years, and for the scores born into the Kingdom, and gone to glory from the fold -- take courage as we remember how this branch was planted, and how it stands in living greenness, being watered by His Almighty hand. The Lord has helped us! In His mighty name we float our banner, and gird up our loins, and press on!"



JOSEPH S. LARRIMORE
Pastor

EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

- *THE REV. THOMAS MEREDITH. From this pastor Meredith College took its name. Founder of "The Biblical Recorder."
- *THE REV. JOSEPH ANDREWS WARNE. This pastor became the first principal of Furman Academy and Theological Institution at Edgefield Court-House, S. C.
- *THE REV. SAMUEL WAIT. First president of Wake Forest College. Later president of Oxford Female Seminary.
- *THE REV. JOHN ARMSTRONG. An organizing leader and later professor of Wake Forest College.
- *THE REV. J. J. FINCH. Principal Sedgewick Female Seminary.
- *THE REV. RICHARD FURMAN, JR. A prominent educational leader. Furman University was named for him.
- *THE REV. MARTIN R. FOREY. President of Chowan College.
- *THE REV. J. M. C. BREAKER. Founder of "The Confederate Baptist."
- *THE REV. WILLIAM HOOPER. Originator of the plan to establish Wake Forest College, and its second president. Later president of Chowan Female Institute.
- *THE REV. J. S. WALTHALL. Associate editor of "The Biblical Recorder."
- *THE REV. ABRAHAM DAVID COHEN. Resident superintendent of the Oxford Orphanage.
- *ALONZO T. JERKINS. Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of North Carolina, A. F. & A. M., for three years.
- *THE REV. C. A. JENKENS. Author of Baptist books.
- *THE REV. THEODORE WHITEFIELD. Principal of a school for the blind in Mississippi, Professor of Greek at the University of Mississippi, and editor of a Baptist paper at Meridian.
- *THE REV. HENRY WILSON BATTLE. Chaplain-in-Chief, Sons of Confederate Veterans. Camp Battle, army camp near New Bern, was recently named for his father, Maj. Gen. Cullen A. Battle, Confederate hero, who was a member of the local church and mayor of New Bern.
- *THE REV. SAMUEL JUDSON PORTER. Author of religious books.
- *THE REV. HIGHT C. MOORE. Editor of The Biblical Recorder. Editorial Secretary Sunday School Board at Nashville, Tenn. Author of Biblical volumes.
- *COL. JOHN D. WHITFORD. Author of a history of New Bern and the First Baptist Church.
- *CHARLES CAUTHORN CLARK. A most eminent leader of the church. Grand Master of the Grand Lodge, A. F. & A. M.

*Deceased.

- *GEORGE S. STEVENSON. Outstanding lawyer.
- *JOHN C. WHITTY. Donor of the "Rowena Whitty Building," a dormitory at the Baptist Orphanage at Thomasville.
- *SAMUEL MITCHELL BRINSON. Craven County Superintendent of Education, then Member of Congress
- *MISS FANNIE HOLLAND. For years organist at the local church, and for 50 years or more a Sunday School teacher.
- *ALFRED DECATUR WARD. Educational and political leader, long dean of the Craven County Bar.
- *EDWARD CLARK. Mayor of New Bern, instrumental in educational progress.
- *THE REV. OSCAR HAYWOOD, D. D. State Representative, educator and author, and outstanding preacher and orator.
- *MRS. CARRIE COLE. Head of the Cradle Roll and Beginners' Department in the Sunday School. For 58 years a Sunday School teacher.
- *THE REV. ROBERT L. PUGH. Craven County Superintendent of Education.

*Deceased.

RESOURCE MATERIAL FOR:

"IN THE BEGINNING - BAPTISTS."

1. Old Church Minutes
2. Modern Church Minutes
3. News Clippings
4. Church Bulletins
5. Commerative Church Programs
6. Regular Church Programs
7. "Biblical Recorder"
8. Col. John Whitfords Historic Papers
("Walking Stick Papers")
9. "The Daily Nut Shell" (Old New Bern Daily Paper)
10. Gertrude Carraway's "Crown of Life"
11. Item from "News and Observer"
12. Keepsake notes kept by some older citizens.
13. Legal recordings from Craven County Register of Deeds Office
14. Many experiences recalled from memory of author.
15. Civil War information from public library.

Quotes were taken directly from

- * Church Minutes
- * "Walking Stick Papers"
- * "Biblical Recorder"
- * "Daily Nut Shell"
- * Commerative Church Programs.

ABSTRACT FROM DEED OF TRUST FOR SALE OF FIRST
PARSONAGE ON CHANGE STREET.

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
DEED BOOK 131, Page 401

22 August 1884

Maria J. Whitehurst nee Bailey, President of the Baptist Parsonage Association and Moses* E. Whitehurst, her husband, Alonza T. Jerkins, William F. Rountree, Thomas Gates, Joseph B. Holland and John P. Hall, Trustees of the New Bern Baptist Church of the first part, and

Nannie O. Seymour, wife of Judge A. S. Seymour of the City of New Bern, State of North Carolina, of the second part

For \$1,000.00 convey

A parcel of land on the North side of Change Street between Craven and E. Front Street, beginning at Benners' Vail formerly Stanley's corner, 100 feet from the intersection of Change and Front Streets, and running thence Westwardly with Change Street 38 Feet to Hancock's line, Northwardly with the said line parallel with Front Street to Hancock's corner, thence Eastwardly parallel with Change Street 38 feet to Carney Bryan's line, thence with Bryan's and Vail's line to the beginning;

Also one other parcel of land adjoining the foregoing on the West, on the North side of Change Street, running thence Eastward along Change Street, to the aforesaid lot 62 feet thence Northwardly and parallel with Front Street to the back line of the piece of land lately the property of Richard Delastatics, thence along said back line westwardly and parallel with Change Street 62 feet, thence Southerly and parallel with Front Street to the beginning, said parcels of land being the same which were conveyed to the said Maria J. Whithurst by Thomas A. Green, and wife by deed registered in Craven County. Book 76 Folio 156-8.

*Moses may not be correct - it is not clear in any of the conveyances by him, nor is it clear on the marriage record.

ABSTRACT FROM DEED OF TRUST OF SMALL PORTION OF LOT
ON WHICH JOHNSON/CRAVEN STREET PARSONAGE WAS BUILT.

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
BOOK BOOK 195

Page 73

31 Jan. 1894

A. T. Jerkins, Thomas Gates, J. B. Holland
W. F. Rountree, J. P. Hall, Trustees of
First Baptist Church of New Bern, of 1st
part
to
George N. Ives

Lot in New Bern, adjoining the lands of First Baptist Church, beginning on West side of Graves Street (Craven) just above Johnson St., at the NE corner of the Baptist parsonage lot and running westwardly with the back line of said lot, 12 feet 6 inches to the western line . . . etc.

This deed made pursuant to action of Middle Street Baptist Church in said City, a conference held Oct. 23, 1893, to the records of which is hereby had . . .

Recorded 18 Jan. 1913, W. B. Flanner, CSC

ABSTRACT OF DEED OF TRUST OF THE SALE OF THE
RICHARDSON PROPERTY ON WHICH EDUCATIONAL BUILDING
WAS CONSTRUCTED

NORTH CAROLINA

CRAVEN COUNTY

DEED BOOK 561, Page 614

6 February 1958

Ernest C. Richardson, Jr.
and wife, Elsie M. Richardson
of Craven County

to

J. E. Paschall, Trustee
of Wilson, N. C.

A. L. Waters, R. O. Fagan, A. V. Thomas, Trustees of First Baptist Church
of New Bern

For \$100.00 and other
valuable consideration

Lot in the City of New Bern, Craven County, North Carolina, on the South
side of Pollock Street between Middle and Hancock Streets, adjoining the
lands of W. F. Ward, the First Baptist church and the lot formerly owned
by W. F. Hill, being more particularly described . . . Beginning in the Southern
line of Pollock Street

Being the same property conveyed to Marjorie Latham
by deed May 15, 1943, recorded in Book 377, 102; Book 465, 389
Indebtedness of \$30,000.00
Deed of trust, Book 544 -59

ABSTRACT OF SALE OF PARSONAGE
AT JOHNSON/GRAVES (CRAVEN) ST.

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
BOOK 609 Page 327
23 Feb. 1961

A. L. WATERS, G. R. BURNHAM, A. V.
Thomas, Trustees of the First Baptist
Church
to
D. F. Patterson and wife, Lila Mae
Patterson
For \$10.00 and other valuable consideration
(11,500.00)

A certain piece or parcel of land in the city of New Bern beginning at the corner of Lot #334, according to the Plan of City of New Bern, at junction of Johnson and Graves (Craven) Streets, running thence Westwardly along the line of Johnson Street 130 feet more or less, thence Northwardly and parallel with Middle St., 140 feet, more or less

Save and except that portion of said lot conveyed by
A. T. Jerkins et al, Trustees for First Baptist Church of New Bern, N. C.
to Geo. N. Ives by deed Jan. 1, 1894 Book 195, P. 73 . . . Further reference
seet book 89, P. 402, office of register of Deeds of Craven County.

ABSTRACT FROM DEED OF LOT IN FOREST HILLS
WHERE PARSONAGE WAS BUILT

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUTNY
DEED BOOK 611 Page 146

A. L. Waters, G. R. Burnham
A. V. Thomas, Trustees of the
First Baptist Church
For \$20,000.00
to New Bern Savings and Loan

Association

\$20,000.00

Forest Hills Lot

See Deed 610, P. 166

ABSTRACT FROM DEED FOR FOREST HILL LOT

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
DEED BOOK 610 Page 166
2 March 1961

Guion E. Lee and Dora Mae Lere, his wife
James E. Jones and wife, Daphne
P. Jones
of Craven County, parties of the first

part

to
A. L. Waters, G. R. Burnham, A. V.
Thomas, Trustee of the First Baptist Church of New Bern
For \$10.00 and other valuable consideration

Lot No. 33 as described on Map of the Plan of Forest
Hills prepared by Darrel D. Daniels, C. E. recorded in Map Book 6, Page
23, office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County, . . .

Subject to restrictive covenants
Dated Oct. 6, 1960 recorded in Book
603 at Page 393. . .

ABSTRACT FROM DEED FOR SALE OF PARSONAGE TO HESTERS

NORTH CAROLINA
CRAVEN COUNTY
DEED BOOK 941, Page 331
24 July 1979

Samuel P. Branch, George R. Burnham
Jennings T. Kennedy, Trustees of the
First Baptist Church of New Bern

to

Joseph P. Hester and Marjorie B. Hester
of Craven County, New Bern
For \$100.00 and other good and valuable
consideration 62,342.00

A parcel of land in Craven County, being all of Lot #33
as designated on a map of the Plan of Forest Hills . . .

Map Book 8, page 23, office of register
of Deeds of Craven County
Subject to restrictive covenants . . .

Recorded 24 July, 1979

Whereas on the 21st day of January 1851 Alexander Mitchell James & Stevenson and James McBrister son Trustees of Newbern Baptist Church granted and conveyed to William P Moore Williams W B Wellons Robert Harvey and James Armstrong as Trustees of the Christian Church of Newbern, the hereinafter described property, said Deed being recorded in Craven County in D. 43 60 P 254. And whereas the said Christian Church of Newbern has ceased to exist as an organized body in Newbern, and whereas all of the Trustees of said Church are now deceased except William W B Wellons party hereto who is surviving trustee, and whereas the Christian Church of the State of North Carolina of which

said Christian Church of Newbern was a constituent part, has by usage and custom exercised full control and authority over the Church property belonging to any of the Churches or Societies in North Carolina acknowledging the form of worship and articles of belief peculiar to said Church and acting in convention with said Church and whereas said Church at its last convention or Conference held at Hank's Chapel Beatham County North Carolina on the 13. 14. 16 and 17 days of November 1874 adopted the following resolution, "On motion of Rev. D. A. Long the Conference appointed J. W. Wellons to go to Newbern as soon as possible, and sell the Christian Church there for cash, and

pay the amount of money which he may receive to Rev. W. S. Long for the purpose of paying him (Rev. W. S. L.) for his services as a minister in Western North Carolina during the coming Conference year"

Now therefore know all men by these presents that we William & J. H. Williams surviving Trustees do hereby sell and convey unto the heirs of J. H. Williams its heirs and assigns forever the premises and the sum of three hundred and forty six dollars to them in hand paid to hereby grant bargain sell and convey to R. Rev. Thomas Atkinson, William H. Little and William R. Cox Trustees to hold property

for the Episcopal Church in the Diocese of North Carolina, and their successors in office all that certain tenement or lot of land and Church situate in the City of Newbern, and County of Craven and State of North Carolina bounded and described as follows, to wit:

On the North and North West by Queen Street On the East by Metcalf Street, &c. the South by Johnson Street being known and designated in the general plan of the said City of Newbern as lot number four hundred and sixteen (416) as by reference to the said plan will more fully appear together with all the privileges and appurtenances to said tenement or lot and Church in any wise appertaining or belonging. To have and to hold the above

granted premises to the said Thomas Atkinson
William H Battle and William R Boy Trustees as
~~aforsaid~~ and their successors to their use and
behooof in fee simple forever. And the said William H
Nellons surviving Trustee as aforsaid and the
Christian Church of North Carolina do hereby con-
nant to the said Thomas Atkinson William H
Battle William R Boy Trustees as aforsaid and
their successors that they are lawfully seized in
fee of the aforegranted premises; That the said
tenement or lot and Churche are free from
all incumbrances. That they the grantors ~~above~~
named have good right to sell and convey the
same to the grantees above named, and ~~that~~
they do hereby warrant and will defend the

same to said Thomas Atkinson, William
Mc Battle and William R Cox Trustees as afore-
said and their successors against the lawful
demands of any and all persons whatsoever.

In testimony whereof the said William W B
Mellons surviving trustee as aforesaid, and
J. W. Mellons attorney in fact as aforesaid have
hereunto set their hands and seals this
day of July in the year of Our Lord One thousand
and eight hundred and seventy five

signed sealed and
delivered in presence
of

W. W. Mellons *(Seal)*
J. W. Mellons *(Seal)*

This indenture made and executed this 10th day of January, 1840, between the said eight hundred and thirty one between James B. McBrine Trustee, Mitchell James, McBrine Trustee for the Baptist Church of New York, the County of New York and State of New York, William B. Yellow, William L. Green, Robert Harvey and James Crossings Trustees for the Christian Church of New York the other part, Witnesseth that the said James B. McBrine Trustee, Mitchell James, McBrine Trustee as aforesaid for and in consideration of the sum of his hundred dollars to them in hand paid by William B. Yellow, William L. Green, Robert Harvey and James Crossings Trustees as aforesaid for receipt whereof they acknowledged their receipt, have not only entered into and entered into a contract with them to the effect hereinafter expressed, to wit: That the said James B. McBrine Trustee, Mitchell James, McBrine Trustee for the Baptist Church of New York, the County of New York and State of New York, William B. Yellow, William L. Green, Robert Harvey and James Crossings Trustees in the County and City of New York, do hereby grant, sell, convey and assign unto the said William B. Yellow, William L. Green, Robert Harvey and James Crossings Trustees in the County and City of New York, the following and bounded in the City and North East by Green Street in East, New York Street, and in the South by Hudson Street and designated in the plan of the town of New York by number four hundred and sixteen as is in reference to the said

place with more fullness together with all the privileges and immunities in
the said letter under that and therein in anywise appertaining or belonging, it
have and to hold the above granted premises to the aforesaid grantees as aforesaid
and their successors to their use and behoof, as for simple feoffment, Relying the said
grantees as aforesaid for ourselves and our successors the same with the said
grantees and their successors that we are lawfully joined in for the same granted
premises that they are, and in all incumbrances that we the grantees aforesaid
have good right to sell and carry on the same to the said grantees as aforesaid and we
the said grantees and our successors shall warrant and defend the same to the
said grantees and their successors as best the said demands of law and all herein
whatsoever, the testimony in force of the said grantees have herein to their hands
and affixed our seals this the day and year first above writing.

Signed Sealed and delivered
in presence of, in presence of

L. G. G. G.

Attest ch. with bearing of

W. H. H. H.
J. H. H. H.
J. H. H. H.

to have and the subscriber under of the Superior Court



